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CHINZICA;

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OR,

THE BATTLE OF THE BRIDGE:

A POEM,

IN TEN CANTOS.

BY HENRY STOBERT.

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*L'amor di libertà bello se stanza
Ha in cor Gentile, e se in cor bosso e lardo
Non virtù, ma furore, e scelleranza.*—Monti.

There's no remedy
Unless by not so doing, our good city
Cleave in the midst and perish.—*Shakspeare.*

CHINZICA, or the "BATTLE OF THE BRIDGE," a Poem,
is founded on that part of the *History of the Pisan Re-*
public, from which is said to have originated the cele-
brated Triennial Festival, called *La Battaglia del Ponte*.
The Commemoration of this Festival continued until the
close of the last Century.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN this Poem is attempted a medium between the formal stateliness of the ancient epic, and the grotesque wildness of the modern romantic tale. The subject, taken from an historical incident, said to have occurred in the year 1005, is that of a free and prosperous city, suddenly brought to the verge of ruin, and involved in a series of calamities, in consequence of foreign invasion, aided by domestic treachery: to counteract which, a combination of extraordinary exertions is carried into effect by a few patriotic individuals, the chief of which, *Chinzica*, the heroine of the story, is a female of the House of *Sismondi*, of German origin, and of high consideration in the *Pisan Republic* during a part of the middle ages.

The main action of the Poem commences on a fine autumnal Italian evening, and occupies two nights and two days. This is connected with another action, which had taken place about two months previous, in the Island

of Sicily ; also occupying two nights and two days, which, besides being frequently alluded to in the course of the main action, is particularly detailed, during an interview between the heroine and one of the chief actors, and engrosses the whole of the sixth and seventh Cantos.

The scene of the main action is laid in the city of Pisa and its neighbourhood ; and that of the Episode, along the east coast of Sicily and on Mount Etna.

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CHINZICA.

CANTO I.

THE VIGIL.

*In ver donna mi sembra
D'alto affare.*——Alfieri.

Why this same strict and most observant watch?—*Shakspeare.*

I.

FROM Julian's brow an anxious gaze
Bends far o'er Pisa's wide spread plain,
Watching the half set sun's red blaze,
Like a fire island on the main ;
Till gradually, less and less,
It seems to burn to nothingness.
'Tis vanished from St. Julian's hill ;
But its last beams are lingering still,
Where northward, yonder golden streaks
Gild Apeninno's snow-clad peaks ;
Which far o'er earth sublimely shine,
Like the abodes of things divine.

How pure, soft, rich, the evening sky
That canopies fair Italy !
How lover-like retires the day,
The sweetest is the parting ray.
But turn again that anxious gaze,
And mark where south, a low dark haze,
Far seaward of Livorno's height,
Scowls on the lovelier face of night.
Beneath that low portentous cloud,
Their sails Sard's wild marauders' crowd ;
Intent to reach the Pisan strand
When midnight wraps the slumbering land ;
Midnight as dark as his dark soul,
Who leads them to a fiery goal.
Reckless of kindred, home, and friends,
Of all save his own selfish ends,
He brings, by vengeful passions pressed,
A dagger to his country's breast.

II.

But there's an eye that marks, afar,
 (St. Julian's guardian height upon)
The cloud that shades his coming war,
 Borne by the breeze that bears him on :

And many a night that anxious eye,
Has watched where joins the sea and sky,
Where every speck, and every cloud
Is deemed some evil-boding shroud.
And there's a head that knows each wile;
And there's a hand to mar his guile;
And there's a heart he tried to gore,
A heart he thinks that beats no more:
But if that heart sustain that form,
To meet him in the battle storm;
Then, while he thinks to win the town
Shall his scared conscience crush him down.
But who shall dictate heaven's decree,
Or even one night's events foresee?—

III.

In Pisa's land no soul, save one,
Foresees the danger of the night;
And he all doomed to watch alone,
Upon St. Julian's guardian height;
Dreading his grief-swoln heart to scan,
As fearful bodings through it ran.
But if he deems his native land
In peril from a traitor's hand;

How can his patriot spirit rest,
Far on St. Julian's mountain crest?
One moment lost, who knows what may—?
'Tis near a league of downward way,
Then twice as far across the plain,
Ere he the Pisan gate may gain;
Yet he stirs not,—though Sard's fell power,
May reach the town ere midnight hour;
Yet he stirs not—for Pisa fair,
Though all he loves be sheltered there.
A friend as murderer belied,
To-morrow must for life be tried:
Though Pisa fall, or 'scape the strife,
Still may that friend pay forfeit life;
Yet he stirs not—although he knows
To-morrow's sun that life may close;
That friend so generous, just and brave,
Whom no one but himself can save;
Yet he stirs not:—so hangs his fate,
'Twixt hope and fear, and love and hate.

IV.

All level spreads fair Pisa's plain,
And Arno smooth and tranquil glides,

As flowing westward to the main,
The spacious city it divides;
Reflecting from its graceful bend,
The Quays that on its banks extend :
That crescent, which from morn till eve ;
The sun's unclouded beams ne'er leave ;
Where rows of palaces arise,
Stretching their tops along the skies ;
And where yon bridge, in graceful pride,
Throws its three arcs across the tide ;
Where citizens and ladies gay,
Enjoy the cool of closing day :
Where simpler groups grotesquely move,
In mirth, in friendship, or in love ;
And where, if evening bell should sound
Amid the scene, sudden spell bound,
The groups in marble stillness stand,
As if by the divine command ;
While every noise and motion's staid,
Until the evening prayer be said ;
Then, as at once by magic chain,
All move in joyous round again.
Such Pisa was ; and even now bears
The splendid stamp of former years.

Such Pisa was, ere rival hate
Despoiled, unpeopled half her state ;
Ere freedom's stubborn spirit cowed,
Beneath a tyrant yoke was bowed
Ere manhood yielded to excess,
And every good to idleness.

V.

As faint and fainter glows the west,
The new moon doth her light betray,
Which, ere she sinks herself to rest,
Is mingled with the dying day.
The mountain peaks have lost their glow,
And pale as death appears their snow,
As they in ghost-like grandeur rise
Amid the blueness of the skies.
But ere the fields with poplars bound,
And vine-festoons linked graceful round ;
Ere olive groves of silvery green,
Grow dark and indistinctly seen ;
Ere twinkling fire-flies, swarming forth ;
Make all the plain a starry earth ;
Lo ! where on Arno's southern quay,
Gazing along day's parting way,

From terraced tower, in black array'd,
Stands Pisa's fairest, saddest maid.
Last moon, from fair Sicilia's strand,
Sweet words traced by a brother's hand,
Foretold of safe return from war,
With wealth, and many an honour'd scar.
But who, in period so brief,
Has felt the extremes of joy and grief?
Is't she with that cold chastened air,
As if ne'er love had enter'd there?
It is: she mourns that brother slain,
His friend in ignominious chain,
Branded with murder's foulest stain.

VI.

Yet pure and placid as heaven's face,
When not a cloud obscures the day,
And calm as if no tempest trace
Had ever marr'd the ethereal way.
Not calmer look'd she on the night
When first she met that dear friend's sight;
Not lovelier, when, as if inspired
By every grace her form display'd,
The poet's flame his accents fired,
And thus his mistress he portray'd.

The Portrait.

“ Tis not her skin surpassing fair,
“ Contrasted with her dark-brown hair ;
“ ’Tis not her dark-blue eyes’ mild flash,
“ Nor pencill’d brow, nor silken lash ;
“ ’Tis not her lips of ruby bright,
“ Parting on teeth of purest white ;
“ Form, stately as the mountain pine,
“ And graceful as the clustering vine :
“ No ! it is something more divine.
“ ’Tis that expression undefined,
“ At once recalling to my mind
“ Those fancied traits, which e’er did seem
“ To be the idol of my dream ;
“ When all my thoughts, in one bright move,
“ Have pictured out a thing to love.”

VII.

Chinzica, calm and lovely both,
Has but the calmness of despair ;
Nor is her loveliness the growth
Of earth, or aught of earthly care ;

'Tis that which springs, fresh even in death,
From Heaven's best gift to sorrow,—faith.
In human minds deep wrought by grief,
Two feelings rise ; Despair, Belief :
Despair sinks back, on earth to lie,
Belief mounts onward to the sky.
Such is the faith that now blooms, where
All else were shadow'd in despair.

VIII.

As a wild bird that feels the snare,
Spreads, and still spreads her wings in vain ;
So Faith, caught down by mortal care,
Still, still renews her flight again.
For where 's the soul enclosed in clay,
That constant points a heavenly way,
Till all her hopes on earth are riven,
And God's grace is in mercy given ?
Where ?—tell me where's that human soul ;
And that shall be my earthly goal.
In Chinzica, religion's seeds
Rise not through superstition's weeds :
By crafty priest and simple nun
Alike unsway'd ; for she has drawn

Pure knowledge from the fountain head,
The holy Scriptures she has read ;
Untainted by that monkish spell,
That draws its magic powers from hell.
And thus the maid is deep imbued
With all that gives her fortitude.
Though bitterest sorrow has indeed,
Bruised her soul like a broken reed :
Before the mercy-seat of God,
She seems to bloom like Aaron's rod.

IX.

Yet she has lost that brilliancy,
Which but in happiness appears :
Her beauty now is like an eye,
That only glistens through its tears.
And though her thoughts are all above,
Still there's a wreck of earthly love,
That pulls them for a moment down.
“ Dragged ignominious through the town,
“ My brother's murderer !”
“ Turn ! oh turn
“ From blood-stained crime ! from shame and scorn !
“ O lady, turn thy steps from thence,
“ Nor sin by retrospective glance.

“ But if on earth thou seekest for rest,
“ Yon altar, by St. Julian blest,
“ That stands beneath the mountain brow,
“ Waits to receive thy virgin vow.
“ Go, since from earth thy hopes are driven ;
“ Go there, and wed thyself to heaven.”

Chinzica looked with wild surprise ;
Yet well she marked Ormasso's voice ;
As his dark cassock she explored,
Begirded with St. Francis' cord.

X.

When all our deep affections torn,
 Leave the heart desolate and bare,
Of every worldly pleasure shorn,
 Still there's a comfort enters there,
When gazing through our sorrows' tears,
We meet the friend of early years.
By such is Chinzica's now cheer'd,
When that impressive voice is heard,
Whence she had drawn her earliest lore,
Amid loved kindred—now no more.
But with its sound, has ceased its charm.
She thinks—she grasps the friar's arm.

Her struggling feelings press : she durst
Not speak. At last these accents burst :
—" Yes!—when the dreadful trial's o'er—
" The murder trial!—then:—no more."—
She turns to hold her breaking heart,
And waves Ormasso to depart.

XI.

The mortal grief that chills her heart,
Held sacred by the holy friar,
Is far beyond his healing art,
And silent turns he to retire.
But first he blessed her ; then—a prayer
Uttered.—She turns :—no friar there.
Where he had stood, a pale dead light
Gleams upon her astonished sight.
The sudden start that shook her frame,
The sudden chill that o'er her came,
The thought half raised and half suppressed,
Are hardly to herself confessed.
She e'er has put her trust on high,
Yet looks with fascinated eye,
As if on some unearthly thing,
That doth an awful warning bring.

Long unassured of groundless fear,
She paused, ere she approached it near.
Though heretofore her well-taught mind
In superstition ne'er declined;
Yet who, when all earth's hopes are gone,
Are not to superstition prone?
We seem with earthless things alone,
When miracles alone we know,
Can bring us back to joy below:
When all our hopes from earth are fled,
Our souls seem by their shadows led.

XII.

O! for the Grecian sculptor's power,
That could immortalize a tear,
To form upon this terraced tower,
A statue of surprise and fear!
She moves a casket,—Is't a dream?
And reads in its own ghastly gleam:

The Casket.

“Chinzica, ere thou lookest hereon,
“Thou must be on thy tower alone:

“ At night’s third hour, in heaven’s blessed name,
“ Open ; nor question whence it came ! ”

She scans the casket light around :
Such light as Alchymists compound
From bones, and such a light, they say,
From bones that on the churchyard lay,
Shoots ghastliest forth in darkest night,
And fills the world with tales of fright !
She reads again, again, again,
Till doubts and fancies whirl her brain.

XIII.

As inward pain is oft allay’d
By what we outwardly apply ;
So grief is, by the restless dread,
That hovers round a mystery.
With some faint hopes, it may relate
Of those she loved, the farther fate,
Chinzica turns the casket round :
A packet to it slightly bound,
Is marked : the superscription scann’d,
Traced by the same mysterious hand.

The Pacquet.

“ Chinzica, this may sooth the time,
“ Until the night’s third hour shall chime :
“ So shall thy griefs more gentle prove,
“ When thou hast learnt how virtuous love
“ Can man’s impurer fires efface,
“ And be the means of heavenly grace ;
“ How friendship’s, and how honour’s name
“ Have been traduced by evil fame.”

XIV.

Oh! ’tis the leaf of Noah’s dove;
And well the heart can understand
That first best gift of absent love,
A letter from a well-known hand !
It speaks a brother’s love, and how
Was pledged again dear friendship’s vow.
Endear’d by war, and war’s worst ill ;
By Chinzica made dearer still.
The letter ceased :——a pause between
Gives fancy all the murder-scene.
Now the same hand hath feebly traced,
And signed : the name is half defaced.

The Evidence.

- “ Ask you who struck the assassin blow ?
“ ’Twas not my friend : *it was my foe.*”
“ Is then Albino innocent !”
Chinzica cries—with look intent,
“ All other ills I now can brave :
“ This half redeems thee from the grave.—
“ Imprison’d ! chain’d !—a mark of shame !
“ Wreck’d honour—friendship—love—wealth—fame !
“ And shall he die ?—No ! By Heaven’s aid,
“ Even I may save him ; I poor maid !”

XV.

When wearied with the world’s ways,
And harassed by the cares we meet,
How dear the dream of early days,
The dream of early love, how sweet !
Chinzica sleeps not ; yet, I deem,
She rests now in a waking dream :
How she, to prove her lover’s heart,
Had play’d a cold reluctant part :
And how, even when the parting came,
Still remain’d unconfess’d her flame.

Now breaks her dream ; and she beholds
Again the packet ; and unfolds :
'Tis dated from a foreign strand,
And written by her lover's hand.

To Chinzica.

“ O virtuous love ! O blessed power,
“ To make us what we ought to be ;
“ Of my worst faults, even to this hour,
“ Unconscious were I but for thee.

“ From object on to object still,
“ My fancy wandered wild and free :
“ Nothing could fix my vagrant will,
“ Until my heart acknowledged thee.

“ Madly ambitious was my soul,
“ The world itself seem'd small to me ;
“ A prison all from pole to pole,
“ Until I found a world in thee.

“ Scarce a superior could I brook,
“ To Heaven I rarely bow'd the knee ;
“ On all mankind proud was my look,
“ Till made all humbleness by thee.

“ O lady, thou hast fix’d my heart,
“ And snatch’d me from ambition’s sea,
“ Thou hast made pride and me to part,
“ And now I ’m all for love and thee !”

XVI.

Her lover’s lines she scarce had read,
And wiped away the trickling tear ;
When thrice, as if to wake the dead,
Was knell’d upon her startled ear
The fated hour, the warning clock :
Rise—haste the casket to unlock :
But who can paint her as she stood
Gazing on characters of blood ;
Which seem’d as if Heaven’s thunder broke,
And thus the awful warning spoke :

The Warning.

“ Pisa ’s in peril !—Thou art bold :
“ Watch like the shepherd of the fold.
“ Pisa ’s in peril !—Watch this night ;
“ Nor close thine eyes ere morning light.
“ Pisa ’s in peril ! Bide the storm :
“ Beware of premature alarm.

“ If in the north the foe arise,
“ Alarm the south with thy loud cries :
“ If in the south he issues forth,
“ Fly to the bridge and raise the north.
“ Albino’s chains thou must unlock ;
“ For he must bear the battle shock :
“ Nay ! every prisoner must fight,
“ Or this be Pisa’s final night.”—

How long her thoughts in one dark maze,
Held her in wild and vacant gaze ;
How long, with clasped hands, and raised eyes,
She seem’d to supplicate the skies ;
How long with fervency she pray’d ;
I know not ; yet I mark’d the maid.
Her tall form in the midnight wind,
Which toss’d her flowing hair behind
I mark’d ; and as the increasing blast
Drove the thick rain unheeded past ;
And as the frequent lightning stream’d,
She like a marble statue gleam’d.
I mark’d again : with calm, still air,
She’s like an angel watching there.

CANTO II.

THE ALARM.

*Le campane si sentono a martello
Di spessi colpi e spaventosi tocchi.* —Ariosto.

What fear is this, which startles in our ears? —*Shakspeare.*

I.

ON Pisa's flat bare lonely coast,
Where in dull moans the night winds sweep,
There flits a form, now seen, now lost ;
Watching where dark along the deep,
Things like sea monsters seem to creep,
As if they feared to scare away,
With noisy haste their slumbering prey :
All silent drifting to the shore,
Without the help of sail or oar :
But nearing now the breaking surge,
At once with vigorous oar they urge,
Till every keel has ploughed the sands.
Again all 's still :—while lengthening bands,

Fast issuing from the high black beaks,
Wind shadowy o'er the ground, like snakes :
Till gathering into solid throng,
They steal like trooping wolves along,
Through night's thick shade : But not I ween,
Unmarked by that which flits unseen.

II.

And not unmarked is he who leads ;
Tracking his prey like sure blood-hound ;
And well I ween, such skill it needs
To wind safe through the marshy ground,
Ere Pisa's destined wall be found.
Is that Catalca, whose first breath
Was drawn in Pisa ? whose first faith
Was pledged in Pisa ? Does he come,
Rushing with ruin to his home ?
Is that Catalca, whose loud tongue
On patriot themes incessant rung ?
Who gloried in corruption's hate,
And towered the champion of the state ?
Who seemed to spend his utmost might
For freedom ; and the people's right ?
Who deemed high, low, rich, poor, wise, fool,
All equal in republic rule ?

Is that Catalca, whose vast mind
Embraced the whole of human kind
In equal love ; and ever view'd
War worst of all man's tyrant brood ?
Now leader of war's bloodiest crew,
At midnight hastening to subdue,
Destroy—oppress—be freedom's foe,—
And fill his native land with woe ?
Is that Catalca ?—Yes ! the same :
Catalca, Pisa's idol name !
And what has wrought this fiend-like change ?
Fiends wrought it :—Envy, Lust, Revenge.

III.

Where hollow 'tis beneath the path,
If footsteps sound the loudest there
If fruit, which rankest poison hath,
Hath surfaces most tempting fair ;
Of patriot seeming then beware ;
Lest o'er the heart truth's outward shew
Conceal where all is false below.
When Pisa searched her martial worth
Who best might lead her army forth,
Catalca strove to win her voice
But failed : Rhodoro was her choice.

When broken was the plighted troth,
And all forgotten many an oath,
Catalca sought a new regard,
But failed : Albino was preferr'd.
Ambition by the brother crossed.
And by the friend the sister lost.
His wish to win that sister's charms,
And eke to lead the Pisan arms,
Which soon had died if unopposed,
Like destiny his soul engrossed.
And for the two, who rivals prove,
One in ambition, one in love,
Their very ties of friendship seem
Bonds of conspiracy to him;
And even his country seems to league
Against him in the foul intrigue.

IV.

The iron-eating power of rust,
Seems but a type far too refined ;
Either of a soul-devouring lust,
Or gnawings of an envious mind.
But if to envy lust be joined,
I ween that not in deepest hell
Are torments which may these excel.

Catalca's soul from its dark nook
Could eye the friends with deadliest look ;
Could o'er its embryo projects brood ;
Yet wear an aspect self-subdued :
Still could he " smile, and smile " at those
He hated as his mortal foes.
Satan, before he fell, surpassed
All angels : when he fell, was last :
The power which made him highest soar,
Perverted, made him sink the lower :
Thus 'tis with man ; while free his will,
As power to good, so power to ill.
The great archangel, when he fell,
Drew down the lesser powers to hell :
So 'tis with human minds, when sin
Doth in the leading power begin.

V.

When one bad passion rules the soul,
Oh how it all subverted lies ;
The lesser powers that round it roll—
Talents—e'en virtues of rare price—
Become the satellites of vice.
What virtues one great vice requires
To accomplish all its dark desires.

What perseverance and long trial !
What courage, patience, self-denial !
Years pass, and envy, still awake,
Groans amid never-pausing ache ;
Years pass, and lust hath still its heat ;
Years pass, and still revenge is sweet.
Not all the changeful scenes of war,
Catalca's fell designs could mar ;
Still could the arch dissembler's art
Conceal the workings of his heart ;
As ever watchful, hovering nigh,
He marked the friends with evil eye ;
While they, all unsuspecting, thought
His disappointments long forgot.

VI.

That revenge which foul envy hatches,
Grows like the dam from which it creeps ;
As some ferocious beast that watches,
It seems to sleep, and never sleeps,
But one eternal vigil keeps.
Far from the camp Albino, drawn
By a feigned summons,—secret gone,
Disguised, (for thus his foe design'd,)
Had left his warrior-dress behind.

A figure in that warrior-dress,
With helmet closed was seen to pass
From the chief's tent ; where soon was found
Rhodoro with a deadly wound.
Full fast the murder-rumour flies,
And echo rings it to the skies :
“ To horse ! to horse ! pursue the accurst ! ”
“ To horse ”——Catalca's friends are first.
By them Albino's dress is ta'en :
And near the spot where it had lain,
Albino's self is found disguised,
And taken, like a thief surprised.
But where 's Catalca ? Long since sent,
He envoy from Sicilia went ;
Despatch'd, 'twas said, as secret guard,
To watch the motions of the Sard :
Therefore suspicion scarce, I deem,
Dare fix the murder-stain on him.

VII.

But how may credence so extend,
That Pisa's annals shall record
Albino slew his bosom friend,
Brother to her his soul adored,—
The worst of homicides abhorr'd ?

If jealousy to madness rise ;
If fame's fair flower by slander dies ;
If even false honour, and false love,
The death of many a friendship prove ;
Nay more ! if circumstances strong,
Almost compel belief along ;
Then Pisa's annals may contain,
" Rhodoro by Albino slain."
'Tis a strange tale ! I pray thee tell
The proofs that may belief compel.
If perfect symmetry of form
To which each motion adds a charm,
If perfect loveliness of face
On which each look bestows a grace,
If all that's graceful, fair and meek,
Can love's resistless language speak ;
Then, o'er Rhodoro's ardent breast,
Lomilla sov'reign sway possess'd :
If where all other powers might fail,
Falsehood and flattery prevail,
Then to Rhodoro's faithful heart
Lomilla sent a poison'd dart :
And let that poison'd dart be plann'd
And guided by a villain's hand.

If in a letter, deem'd address'd
To himself, the victim saw express'd,
(Starting, as if some evil power
Had stung him from his fav'rite flower)
In well known characters, love's flame,
To whom?—a blank supplied the name!
“Chinzica's charms for her's despised :”
“*For him—Rhodoro sacrific'd!*”
If such ambiguous phrase betray'd
A false friend and a treacherous maid ;
Then Pisa's annals may contain,
“Rhodoro, by Albino slain !”

VIII.

Though he who discord's apple threw,
In hopes to sever friendship's bond,
That friendship's nature little knew,
Which, true and tender, firm and fond,
Bids every sympathy respond ;
And every rankling thought be told.
No cold reserve—all frank and bold ;
Doubles each joy ; and gives relief
To every pang, by sharing grief.
Though horror-struck surprise which stared,
And genuine fervour which declared,

Convinced Rhodoro at one view,
Albino's friendship still was true :
Yet if his struggling spirit seems
Tost between two opposing streams :
If dreadful meanings, half defin'd,
Betray the anguish of his mind ;
And if Albino, hurt, confused,
Scarce deems his own heart less abused ;
Where every circumstance now tends
To mar the comfort friendship lends ;
If what now passed these friends between,
Forbodes some more disastrous scene ;
At least, if such might be inferr'd
From what is faintly overheard ;
If, after this fierce scene is done,
A message in mysterious tone
Invites Albino to that spot,
Whence as a murderer he is brought
Disguised ; and if his pride, or shame,
The purpose hides why there he came ;
Then Pisa's annals may contain
“ Rhodoro, by Albino slain !”
But more ! 'tis by Rhodoro's fall,
That Pisa's ill-defended wall—

Her army unreturned,—this hour
Is placed within a villain's pow'r ;
Who thus, by one weak woman's change,
Reaps a long harvest of revenge.

IX.

'Tis dark midnight : High swells the wind ;
And lightnings flash : and thunders roll :
And rain is driven : yet all combin'd,
Though forming one terrific whole,
Is but faint emblem of that soul,
Which hardly marks the scene, save where
It seeks the path through lightnings' glare.
Could we but see the moral sky,
Laid open to the mental eye,
As plainly as we see the night ;
That traitor's soul—oh ! what a sight !
Now by tempestuous passions tost ;
Now burning with insatiate lust ;
Now rearing envy's form who shakes,
Through the black chaos all her snakes ;
Now thundering forth its fell commands ;
Now raging midst the flaming brands ;

Now sweeping o'er his country's last ;
Now flashing on the murder past.

X.

But, mark !—scarce has the marsh been cleared,
And firm ground given steadier speed :
Scarce on the villain's mind has 'peared
The memory of the assassin deed,
Smiling to see the victim bleed.
Scarce rise his hopes on love's death pang,
And o'er the prize in rapture hang ;—
When like heaven's bolt, and breathing ire,
And shedding foam like flakes of fire,
A war horse darting through the night,
Bears a tall form all armed for fight,
Whose shield seems like a moon to shed
Such light as should illumine the dead ;
While his poised lance appears to fly,
A meteor through the pitchy sky.
The same strange light his helmet threw,
Which gave his frown a death-like hue,
As through the elemental strife,
It seemed to threat Catalca's life.

Like some huge tower by lightning struck,
Catalca's spirit feels the shock.
But ere his scattered thoughts, dashed down
By that unearthly withering frown,
Collect ; I ween the warrior form
Is vanished in the midnight storm ;
Leaving these dreadful sounds behind,
Which seem to thunder through his mind ;
“ We meet before the fight be done !
“ We meet before the town be won ! ”

XI.

It is no phantom of the brain,
Such as a murderer's crime might raise :
For mark how all Catalca's train
Are rivetted in stupid gaze,
And bless themselves in all the ways
Of Christian, Mussulman, and Jew :
Such as compose this motley crew.
They wavered,—turned ; prepared to flee ;
Till, rousing all his courage, he
Coiled the long snake-like form he led,
Around himself—the monster's head.

Waving his sword through flashing light,
He cries : " Friends ! ' tis our guardian sprite, }
" That calls us onward to the fight.
" Shall you, who 've faced death in each form,
" Run from a phantom of the storm?—
" Go then, fly back, without a guide,
" Through flooded marsh and boisterous tide;
" While the brave few,—the wiser souls,
" Choose the safe course :"—The coil unrolls
And all press towards the destin'd walls.

XII.

Heard you that awful thunder crash,
As if a thousand rocks were blown ?
Saw you that awful lightning flash,
As if night's curtain back were thrown
And all the plain distinctly shewn ?
Spite of that dread volcanic roar,
As if earth were asunder tore,
Pisa seems dead !—and yon pale form,
Watching her corpse amid the storm !
Soon shall she wake from that brief death,
As if at the last trumpet's breath ;

For, through the glare terrific, tall
Dark figures on the seaward wall,
Rising like shapes of hell are seen ;
And in the awful pause between
The flash and burst, are voices heard,
By that pale form—that angel guard !

XIII.

Oh ! what are the maid's feelings when,
As forth again the lightning streams,
She sees the ranks of armed men ;
And hears what quick in memory's gleams,
Wakes a dark train of mingling dreams ;
A voice which oft her ear had met,
With love more terrible than hate !
And which would now, if there was need,
Add feathers to her fear-winged speed.
Along the quay her rapid flight
Seems almost like a stream of light ;
A moment, and the bridge is crossed ;
A moment, and her form is lost ;
A moment, and I hear the cries :
“ To arms ! to arms ! arise ! arise !

“ Arm, citizens ! your town ’s assailed !
“ The south side’s seaward walls are scaled !”
But, hark ! methinks the alarum bell
Is answered by a savage yell ;
And shrieks of human woe and fear,
Through heaven’s deep echoes pierce mine ear.

XIV.

O ! ne’er doth misery impart
 (Like screaming hare by dogs girt round,)
A pang so powerful to the heart,
 As when her shrill and piercing sound
 Is half in deeper discords drowned.
But vain were sounds, although of hell,
The horrors of this night to tell ;
And vain were colours, though of fire,
And vain were nerves, although of wire,
To serve for picture even most faint,
To guide the hand that dared to paint :
But there are none ! and if there were,
What mortal age the sight could bear ?
’Tis mercy that, in scenes like these,
Or passions blind, or horrors freeze ;

Else could humanity behold,
And not be into madness rolled ?

XV.

Yet I have marked yells, shrieks, groans, screams,
And bursting flames, and torches flashing,
Mingling their blaze with lightnings' gleams ;
Roof, portico, and balcon crashing,
Mid thunder peals, and torrents lashing.
Yet these form but a mild portrait,
Which all may bear to contemplate ;
Until you bring, to animate,
Lust, murder, cruelty, rage, hate,
Fear, terror—all the fiends of mind,
In one infernal group combin'd.
I've marked where, through the streets half-clad,
Pursued by ruffians, victims fled,
Dashed merciless amidst the flood,
Swelling the kennels with their blood.
Yet this seems but an easy sketch !
For, lo ! where that poor startled wretch,
Wakes weltering in his gore, mid hordes
Tossing his infants on their swords,

Turning with terrible grimace
The blood spouts at the mother's face.
And, lo ! where even, mid this fell din,
With horrid smile and maniac grin,
As drenched in carnage, still uncloy'd :
They curse all things yet undestroy'd :
They curse the stones : the skies blaspheme,
Whose torrents drown the rising flame :
Till sudden check'd by one dread yell :
'Tis Hafed's ! and they know it well :
'Tis the sure cry of battle nigh,
And stops the work of butchery.

XVI.

But where 's the chieftain of the scene ?
Lo ! issuing yonder tower beneath,
A fear-struck form, in posture mean,
Doth round his limbs her fair arms wreathe,
And piteous prayers for mercy breathe.
Can form so fair, such touching strain,
To mortal man e'er plead in vain ?
And least of all, in vain to one
Who swore to shelter her alone ?

Who swore—but who in secret swore,
And a false priest the compact tore.
Are these, when last from war he came,
The charms which e'en surpass'd their fame ?
Charms which outshone each other maid,
And e'en threw Chinzica's in shade ?
Charms, which, if now unblanch'd by fear ;
Unparalleled, would still appear ?
Lomilla's charms ; which made the wish,
Rhodoro's hated hopes to crush,
Appear like ice compared to fire ;
So terrible was his desire !
Lomilla's charms, for which he tried
Each art of flattery :—swore ; wept ; lied :
For which he swore Rhodoro's breath
Had pawned to foreign love his faith ;
For which he wept, until his tears
Had melted firmer hearts than hers ;
For which he lied, until pretence
Engrossed all heights of excellence.
For which he fasted, waked, and watched ;
And in all penance seemed unmatch'd ;
For which he would have dared all crime ;
And if immortal, outwatched time.

Mayhap had he been tyrant's slave,
Or some fierce robber of the wave,
Whose storm-girt joy, a brief sun-blink,
Is ever snatched on danger's brink,—
Had safe possession ne'er been gained,
His constancy had still remained;
Nor his fixed soul e'er turned to clasp,
Another's charms which shun his grasp.

XVII.

When the maid fled, it was to save
A city ; yet ere forth she came,
She first a hasty warning gave
Her household, and the good old dame
Who holds a nurse's tender claim ;
Thus, happily, Catalca none
Had found to wreak his vengeance on.
'Twas rushing wrathful hence, he met
His wife ; at first she knew him not ;
Till well-known accents caught her ear,
And glowing joy displaced pale fear.
Oh ! could he then resist that look,
Where love in every feature spoke ?

Could he these fair, fond arms resist,
 Which strove to catch him to her breast? }
 He could! He did!—He had possest! }
 He fled: but she, like winged dart,
 O'ertook him. "O say not—we part!
 "O let me follow, even through strife;
 "And be thy slave, if not thy wife.
 "But tell me, love, when, how you came;
 'And why this midnight strife and flame:
 "Oh! I'm bewildered, heavenly Power!
 "From Chinzica Sismondi's tower
 "Thou comest, and I am sacrificed:
 "Gods! are *my* charms no longer prized?"
 Catalca turned with sudden burst;
 "Hence, pestering woman! hence accurst!
 "I'm surfeited!—I'm cloyed!—I'm full! }
 'And now thy charms are to my soul }
 "Loathsome as the green stagnant pool!
 "By flattery's bait I caught those charms—
 "To tear them from a rival's arms.
 "Hear this!—His love was true till death!
 "He gasped thy name with life's last breath!
 "Go then! reclaim that love in hell!"—
 By Hafed's wild Arabian yell

His speech was closed : the moment pressed :
He launched his sword against that breast,
Which oft had pillowed him to rest.
She fell: but Heaven, deaf to her prayer,
Reserved her still for earthly care.

CANTO III.

THE REPARATION.

Sù suso, ò cittadini, alla difesa.—Tasso.

The fearful time
Cuts off the ceremonious vows of love.—*Shakspeare.*

I.

NOW is the alarm through Pisa spread ;

Now is abandon'd every bed ;

Now sleep from every eye is fled,

Except where death has been ;

The weak, the timid, and the bold,

Female, and male, and young, and old,

To fight, or tend the fight, are call'd :

High, low, rich, poor, proud, mean.

Distress, like death, has levell'd all,

And all must fight or all must fall :

There is no middle path of choice ;

And loud is Freedom's gathering voice,

From house to house, from street to street

Borne upon terror's rapid feet.

II.

- “ Haste to the bridge, ye Pisans brave !
“ ’Tis battle there alone can save
“ Our city from one common grave !
 (Is this an angel’s cry ?)
“ The very elements contend
“ Against our foes, and us befriend ;
“ Heaven’s voice commands us to defend
 “ Our homes ; forbids to fly.
“ Where should we fly ? where refuge find,
“ Midst thunder, lightning, rain, and wind ?
“ Our sick ?—our babes ?—No ! Heaven directs !
“ And curst who such a voice rejects !
“ Does nature cry in feeblest breast,
“ Even with thy life defend thy nest ?
“ Deaf to such cry shall Pisa be,
“ Whose nest is built on freedom’s tree ?
“ Our town surprised, the south side ta’en,
“ Where all the fiends of slaughter reign ;
“ Still Arno’s bridge and Arno’s flow
“ Divide this north half from the foe.
“ Know ye a Roman’s single force
“ Held a bridge ’gainst an army’s course ?

“ Oh! haste then to the bridge, ye brave !
“ The battle there alone can save
“ Our country from one common grave.”

III.

High on the steps before the porch
Of yonder venerable church ;
Begirt by many a blazing torch,
And multitudes below ;
With countenance sublimely fired,
By all who hear, more than admired,
Chinzica stands like one inspired,
And spreads the patriot glow.
No utterer of ambiguous fate,
Ere looked so wonderful, so great.
Is that the maid whom late we saw
Timid, heart-broken, chilled with woe ?
Now filled with courage, firmness, flame,
And breathing loud her country's name,
Who late in private grief seemed lost,
Now shining forth the public boast ;
Then drooping like the mourning dove,
Now soaring like the bird of Jove :

Seek you the cause of all this change ?
Go, trace it through affection's range :
Go, trace where love is sown in all ;
The spirit's vital principle :
Of every virtuous act the cause ;
The source whence every duty flows ;
First to its Maker,—and, on earth,
Next to the land which gave it birth :
So Abraham's faith was highest styled,
Which offered up a guiltless child :
So Brutus' patriotism shone,
Which sacrificed a guilty son.
Go, trace how generous love ascends
To country from home, kindred, friends ;
And how in God begins and ends. }
Go, trace the genuine patriot course
Up to its pure domestic source :
All else is but an empty name !
Selfishness, or the thirst of fame.
Go, trace where comfort, life, and rest,
Are given that others may be blest.
Then see in this maid's scorn of death,
Love, friendship, patriotism, faith.

Oh ! that this heaven-descended thing,
Of every moral good the spring,
Should e'er be stagnant all in self ;
Or buried in a miser's pelf !
Or, losing some long cherished joy,
By its own desperate stab should die !—
Should basely e'er from life recede,
While one exists its help to need !
If friends die, still our country lives ;
If country dies, mankind survives.

IV.

Fast rush the Pisans to the bridge,
Where, foremost on its midway ridge
Goldava stands ; with battle's edge
Presented, undismay'd
At Hafed and his desperate band ;
The wild sons of Arabia's land,
Burning and subtle as the sand
Which form'd their native bed.
Leaving the butchering scenes behind,
In hopes a richer prize to find,
They 've met, I ween, what now will try
Their native fire and subtlety.

And now the wild Arabian cry
Gives warning of the battle nigh.
“ Now, Pisans, mark ! (Goldava said)
“ The swarthy face and turban'd head !
“ Ne'er they 'll forget Calabria's plain,
“ Which drank their smoking blood like rain ;
“ When Pisa's banners waving high,
“ Dashed their proved crescents from the sky.
“ I know them well : their deep revenge
“ Outlives all distance, time, and change.
“ And if this night we hence retreat,
“ Then that revenge—oh ! how complete !
“ No ! by our patriot saint I swear !—
“ And all will join my oath who dare—
“ Never to quit this spot alive,
“ Until these miscreant dogs we drive ;
“ Till we redeem our town surprised,
“ And our bridge be immortalized ;
“ Oh ! cursed be the assassin hand
“ That brought this woe upon our land ;
“ But see Rhodoro's spirit rise ;
“ How in his sister's voice it cries !
“ Behold in this a sign from Heaven,
“ That ample succour will be given.

“ And who would fly where woman aids ?
“ Who would not fight where woman bids ? ”

V.

O ! ever wonderful, the sky,
By weakest means, can aid supply !
O ! who that heard the patriot cry,
 And saw the patriot maid ;
Nor deem'd Rhodoro's spirit flown,
Had only parted from his own
To make his sister's breast its throne,
 His country still to aid ?
Now, while the invaders, held at bay,
Wait reinforcements for the fray :
Along the north while crowds assemble,
And anxious watch the bridge, and tremble ;
During this awful interval
Of preparation ; and while all
Seem gazing at suspended fate,
Chinzica passed the prison gate.

VI.

'Twas there good Zemina, since she fled
The tower, had by appointment staid ;

'Twas there she hail'd the enthusiast maid,

Who—when her speech was done,

Which pour'd like light the patriot glow

Along, around, above, below—

Flew like an arrow from a bow,

The public gaze to shun.

The warning traced with blood is shewn,

And all the night's events made known.

I ween the blood is well design'd

To work upon the gaoler's mind :

“ Full well I know, (he cries,) our need

“ Requires each warrior prisoner freed ;

“ But if our city still exist,

“ And brave Albino's hence be miss'd,

“ When trial should decide his fate,

“ My life lies forfeit to the state.

“ But, Lady, since to thee we owe

“ Our lives ; I take thy word for law.

“ And since it needs Albino's hand

“ To aid this night our sinking land,

“ Then let him fight in strange array,

“ And be unknown amid the fray.

“ If he should fall in this great strife,

“ On that chance be my risk of life.

“ If he survive; for his return
“ Thy word be pledge; all else I scorn.”
He said, and brought the strange array ;
Then to the dungeon led the way,
Where Chinzica’s dread task remains
To loose her lover’s prison chains ;
While ’tis the goalers to prepare
The other prisoners for the war.

VII.

Harsh on her ears the hinges creak,
The patriot glow forsakes her cheek,
She scarce has strength her way to seek,
 And life seems ebbing fast.
Sinking amid the dungeon gloom,
She feels as if within the tomb ;
As if through death’s gates she had come,
 This dreadful night her last.
Does ’t move a woman’s generous breast,
To see the man she loves distress’d ?
Does ’t agitate a lover’s heart,
A meeting after long apart ?
Does sister see without a tear,
A much-mourn’d brother’s friend appear ?

Does the soul shudder with affright
At dungeon, chains, and midnight fight ?
But to distress, if loss of fame
Join with disgrace, dishonour, shame ;
If lovers meet in grief and pain,
And only meet to part again :
If brother's friend hath lover's claim,
And bear that brother's murderer's name ;
If dungeon, chains, and midnight strife
Involve all that is dear in life ;
If each such impulse, singly felt,
Suffice to madden, freeze, or melt,
Then who can picture forth her mind,
Her feelings—thoughts ? which all seem'd twin'd
Like flowers with serpents ? who can ask ?
If heart had ever harder task ?
What may such mental scene be called !
Its very consciousness appalled,
As if she saw, on the same field,
Strife, feasting, dance, and funeral, held.
Chinzica, risen as from a trance,
Casts round a wild half-conscious glance,
And by the lamp's dim light, can trace
A tall dark form, and pallid face—

Gazing—half raised on couch of straw—
In dumb astonishment and awe.

VIII.

At length Albino silence brake ;
He seemed as if scarce yet awake :
Fixed was his gaze, while thus he spake :—

“ Is this an earthly dream ?

“ Or meet we now in Heaven, sweet maid ?

“ Sure, sure thou art a blessed shade,

“ And these the regions of the dead,

“ And this a heavenly gleam.

“ Ha ! now before the face of Heaven

“ To prove my innocence 'tis given.”

“ Alas ! our souls earth still contains,

“ And thou, Albino, still in chains.

“ In Heaven, thy innocence is known :

“ It must be proved on earth alone.”—

Albino started at the sound,

As if new waked, and staring round,

“ Dost thou then live ? what fate impels

“ Chinzica to these wretched cells ?

“ They told me thou hadst died of grief !”—

“ They told they false ! however brief
“ My life, it will, I trust, be spared
“ To hear thy innocence declared.
“ I hold a testimony, penn’d
“ By my brave brother’s dying hand,
“ Which clears thy fame.—But hold, give ear,
“ Until I tell my mission here:
“ What fate impells me ? Pisa’s fate !
“ ’Tis on the brink ! Destruction’s gate
“ Wide open, pours its flood of woes !
“ Midnight surprise, and unknown foes !
“ South Pisa is beneath their yoke,
“ Where all is havoc, flame, and smoke ;
“ Our northern side is still ungain’d :
“ The strife is on the bridge maintain’d !”

IX.

“ How then fled Chinzica her tower ?”
“ I gave the alarm : By what strange power—
“ I ’ll tell thee in a calmer hour,
“ If we outlive the night.
“ Mean time, Albino’s warrior hand,
“ By that mysterious power’s command
“ Is call’d to aid his native land,

“ In this unequal fight.
“ For this I ’ve pass’d the prison bar—
“ To unchain thee like a dog of war !!
(A short wild laugh her speech here broke)—
“ For this alone, can I unlock
“ Thy chains. But go disguised, unknown ;
“ To save thee, not from foes alone,
“ But even from friends—Oh ! then beware !
“ And Heaven will bless our mutual care !
“ To save thee in the fight be thine :
“ To save thee in the trial mine.
“ I ’ve pledged my word that here again
“ Thou comest—unless in battle slain”—

“ In either case, oh ! generous maid,
“ Let me be brought ;—alive or dead
“ Yet if I fall, one boon I claim :
“ Chinzica !—vindicate my fame”—

She grasped his hand with sudden start,
And held it to her beating heart.
She strove to speak ; but tears burst forth ;
Convulsed with sobs, she sunk to earth.
Good Zemla raised her up. They prayed.
Albino for the fight arrayed

In haste, and as he turned to go,—

“ That I thy pity have, I know !

“ But there ’s a word of higher charm,

“ Would in the battle nerve my arm,

“ To rise all former feats above ;

“ And to die blest : that word is—love !

“ That word has ever been denied”—

“ Albino !” (Chinzica replied)

“ Love is a cold, weak, hackneyed term,

“ Debased to things of every form ;

“ To each loose theme : O ! for a word,

“ In songs unhallowed never heard,

“ Which might each glowing trait include

“ Of pure love, pity, gratitude !

“ By such a word might be expressed

“ That feeling till now unconfessed,

“ Which reigns for thee within my breast.”

She said ; and on his bosom sank :

O ! then of love how deep they drank !

The embrace was brief : but O ! how vast !

They felt it as their first and last.

X.

The parting lovers had embraced ;
When suddenly, with looks aghast,
And breathless all with furious haste,
 A war-clad man appeared :
Doffed was his helm in his left hand ;
His right one bore a naked brand ;
His breast a rusty cuirass spanned ;
 His face seemed one huge beard :
His nose and just below the eye,
Was all the flesh you might espy.
His head, all matted and o'ergrown,
White hairs and black alternate sown,
Did like a withered thorn-bush shew,
Besprinkled by a fall of snow ;
From midst of which his eyes did beam
Like glimpses of a winter stream.
His mouth, as forth wild speech it gave,
Seemed moving like enchanted cave.
But first, ere uttering a word,
He kneeled, and dropping helm and sword,
Caught up a hand of each, and kissed ;
Then as he spread his own and blessed,

I ween they well can recognise
Big tear-drops rolling from his eyes ;
And well recall the old men's name :
And "Storgo ! Storgo !" all exclaim—
" Hush ! hush my name ! I'm prisoner here !
" Hush ! every stone hath got an ear !
" There 's danger in the very wind,
" And foes before—and foes behind !—
" Hush ! I 'm unknown : my beard hath grown,
" Ere since my master was o'erthrown ;
" My hair was black, 'tis now half white ;
" Grief changed it in a single night.
" My beard hath grown, and still shall grow,
" Till I have seen the avenging blow."
With that he drew a blood-stained blade,
And glared wild on it as he said,—
" Oh ! thou accursed murderous knife,
" That drank my master's blood of life !
" Soon may'st thou slake thy savage thirst
" Deep in thy owner's blood accurst !"
With earnest haste the maiden cried,
" Oh tell me how my brother died !"

" Lady, 'twas said by a wise king,
" There is a time for every thing:—

“ And ere the tale thou ask’st be told—

“ (To-morrow—if we grow so old—

“ And I be free to play a part

“ At once to cheer and vex thy heart)

“ There must be many a bloodier scene,

“ And many a sadder tale between :

“ For there is danger in the wind,

“ And foes before, and foes behind.

XI.

“ Twelve days they ’ve had me in their pound ;

“ They ’ve racked ;—but stubborn stuff they found ;

“ Till now, I ’ve uttered not a sound

“ That might myself betray.

“ Of late they ’ve let me loose about

“ Among the prison rabble rout :

“ By spies they ’ve thought to find me out

“ But I ’m as pledged as they.

“ I ’ve guessed the false hearts from the true,

“ And by God’s help, with a bold few,

“ We’ll guard the rearward of the fight,

“ And bring some treacherous plot to light,

“ Come then, if cries behind you hear,

“ Keep fast the front: we ’ll guard the rear ;

“ For there is danger in the wind,
“ And foes before, and foes behind”—

“ A plot ! ! ”——

“ Yes, Lady, though you ’ve spread
“ The patriot flame through hearts most dead !
“ Our free-born Pisans well I know,
“ Their generous sympathy in woe ;
“ In danger bold ; patient in toil ;
“ And clinging to their native soil.
“ But every ground hath got its weeds,
“ And every plant its cankered seeds :
“ And there is danger in the wind,
“ And foes before, and foes behind :
“ And there ’s a plot !—forth have I been—
“ And now the exchange of signals seen ;
“ A cross, which torches seemed to form.
“ None but myself in all the alarm,
“ Perhaps hath marked, save those who plot ;
“ I saw—and hurried from the spot,
“ To give Albino warning now,
“ For he will keep the van I trow”—
I ween at this alarming tale,
That even Albino grew more pale.

If boldest warriors learn to fear,
Even in broad day, foes in the rear ;
Well may they dread a rearward fight,
Amid the darkness of the night.

Chinzica starts with sudden thought :

“ It is, oh, Heaven ! it is a plot !

“ For as they scaled the walls I heard

“ Catalca’s voice ! ”—

“ Then ’tis the Sard !

(Albino cries) “ And like a dream,

“ Breaks on my mind, the infernal scheme !

“ Catalca’s voice ?—I see !—I see !—

“ Rhodoro ne’er had foe save he ;

“ Catalca’s voice ? Oh ! vengeance lend—

“ My all ! my country ! and my friend ;

“ Catalca’s voice ?—Blessed maid, adieu !

“ Heaven will direct us what to do.”

THE HISTORY OF

THE CITY OF BOSTON

FROM 1630 TO 1800

BY JAMES OSGOOD

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

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CANTO IV.

THE CONFLICT.

*Come varia del pugar la sorte,
Varia la tema in lor varia l'affanno.*—Tasso.

The disorder's such
As war were hoodwinked.—*Shakspeare.*

The Battle of the Bridge.

I.

BLACK is the night o'er Pisa still ;
And peals succeed the frequent flash ;
And, as decreasing torrents lash,
The winds rave wilder and more shrill ;
While sounds of courage, wrath, and woe,
Now roaring yelling, screaming past,
More mingled, fierce, and frantic grow,
Swelling and sinking on the blast.

In one close mass, urged on by hell,
Arabs and Sards now rush pell-mell. }
They'll find the Pisans hard to quell ; }
Who fight beneath their country's eye,
Cheered from behind by freedom's cry—
Cheered from that glorious crescent wide
Of palaces, the city's pride!
Which, half a league from flank to flank,
Bends fair round Arno's northern bank.
I ween that now, a single glance
Might mark along the whole expanse,
Shining each balcon—window—porch,
Spite of the blast, with lamp and torch.
And, lo ! amid the amazing glare,
Are crowds on crowds assembled there :
Each class and rank, each sex and age,
All filled with one great patriot rage ;
Maids, matrons, boys, old men, and priests,
Mothers with infants at their breasts,
All come to see—and cheer the sight,
Sons, fathers, brothers, husbands, fight.
No thought of parting ! all seem there
Resolved each other's fate to share.

There glows a fire in every heart,
Superior to each help of art:
There glows a fire in every frame,
Which scarce the tempest's shock may tame.

II.

On Pisa's bridge the hosts have clash'd,
And warriors fast are press'd to earth,
And life's hot blood is gushing forth,
Corslets, helmets, spears, swords, shields, are smash'd.
So meet two boiling lava streams
In unimaginable shock ;
Hissing and smoking forth their steams,
Rolling and crushing rock on rock.
And as, where lava's torrents pour,
Eruption's deafening thunders roar,
And bursting flames and gleams arise,
Far flashing on the earth and skies ;
So peal on peal roars round the fight,
So bursts on every side the light.
No river's bank, no sea-beat coast,
In all the world's wide round may boast
Crescent more grand, of grace more rare,
One more magnificently fair,

Than thine Lung'arno lately seen
 Ali gilded by the rays of e'en :
 A few short hours—how changed the scene !
 Then beauty in its sweetest prime !
 And now—now terribly sublime !
 The lovely Bow which earth doth span,
 In token of Heaven's love to man ;
 And the fair crescent of the night,
 Have looked mayhap, on deadlier fight ;
 But never art-erected Bow
 Hath shone on bloodier scene of woe.

III.

Full many an anxious glance is thrown,
 Which from the north the bridge surveys ;
 But round the river's southern quays,
 'Tis silence all, and dark and lone ;
 Save where, just rearward of the fight,
 The invaders cry, and torches gleam ;
 And where, upon the startled sight
 Bursts conflagration's half-quenched beam.
 Yet from that anxious gazing throng,
 Which spreads the northern bank along,
 I ween that not a glance is sent,
 More keen, more anxious, more intent,

Than from the southern bank is thrown,
By one who flits unmarked, unknown.
From Arno's stream that glance first rose,
Just where it into Pisa flows ;
Then from the south quay's eastward end,
Pleased on the crescent's blaze did bend ;
And though it paused not o'er that scene,
Where desolation's hand had been,
The fire it flashed, the drop it shed,
No common sympathy display'd.
But, lo ! 'tis fixed in blank amaze,—
It widens to an icy glaze,—
It melts—it swims—it drowns in tears,
Where Beauty's bleeding form appears.
The wound is staunch'd ; the fair one laid
Unconscious on Sismondi's bed.
Where now that glance?—upon the tower ;
Watching the fortune of the hour :
Beneath it spread the dark south quays,
Before it yon vast crescent blaze.

IV.

But 'tis the Bridge that glance attracts ;
It is the bridge that lies between ;

(The awful centre of the scene)
And darkly from the blaze projects.
I ween that deeds are doing there,
Far easier fancied than beheld ;
And scarce may keenest glance declare
Which side is likeliest to be quelled.
No angrier torrent, by my faith !
E'er roared the dizziest bridge beneath ;
Than now o'er Pisa's seems to rave,
And dash in many a broken wave.
O'er shields and helmets, upon that bridge,
Glance many a steely point and edge ;
Tossed to and fro like shivered ice
Which from the polar billows rise.
This is no dull, cold-blooded fight,
Standing aloof a missile's flight ;
But well the foremost ranks descry
The flashes of each other's eye ;
And from each other's very breath,
Catch hot excitement to their wrath.
'Tis not the weaponed hand alone,
By which the work of hate is done ;
There 's not a limb mixed in the strife,
But seems exuberant of life :

Even those who feel the mortal blow,
Struggle to fall amidst the foe :
Like wounded serpents writhing lie,
And sting in their last agony.

V.

Tired of repeated shocks, at length,
With lips compressed, and breath hard pent,
Shoulder to shoulder now is lent,
And man backs man with all his strength.
And as two bulls which, long in vain,
By desperate butts their powers have tried,
Head planted against head remain,
Battle by main force to decide.
So are the hostile columns met ;
Full braced each nerve, each limb firm set,
Held in each breath, each war-cry hush—
To win the bridge, by desperate rush.
Strive, Pisa ! strive with might and main !
To utmost pitch each sinew strain !
For every Arab, every Sard,
Is broad and brawny, tough and hard ;
And all are in the prime of life,
And long inured to toil and strife,

Strive Pisa ! strive ! each sinew strain !
Strive or you ne'er may strive again.
Alas ! it is in ill starred-hour
That Pisa thus exerts her power,
Dropping the sword to try main force
Against this rude barbarian course ;
For though she still can wield a brand,
With fearless heart and active hand ;
Yet, all her strongest sons of war,
In this sad hour of need, afar,
She now has little more, in sooth,
Than feeble age and stripling youth ;
In vain she would, with numbers try
Her lack of sinew to supply ;
In vain her sons press round the bridge,
And block it up in desperate wedge ;
In vain into each gap they cram :—
Like the swollen floods o'erwhelmed dam,
Beneath the invading torrent's roar,
They fall !—and shall they rise no more ?

VI.

A scream was uttered when they fell ;
It was a scream of sudden fear ;

I ween it was a thing to hear,
That might all sense of hearing quell.
When Pisa saw her patriot wall
Thrown down by that impetuous stream,
It simultaneous burst from all :—
Oh, God ! I hear it now—that scream !
The crash of arms, the groan of death,
Is drowned in terror's piercing breath.
Yet 'mongst the fallen, where life is found,
There, there, the foeman's heels are bound :
With dying grasp they held them fast,
To check the torrent as it passed :
To gain time for the rearward war
To form a more impervious bar.
They faint : they fall ; but thought of life
I ween, is not in all that strife.
O'er heaps of fallen, the Invaders toil,
Or, falling, swell the groundward broil ;
Or with fierce tread the prostrate spurn ;
Or down their points all spiteful turn :
Even on the dead their vengeance waste,
In bitterness of thwarted haste.

VII.

Forced backwards o'er the failing throng,
Yet towering still in warrior pride,
And stemming still the battle's tide,
Lo ! where Goldava, borne along,
Has freed a space for his long arm,
And swept his sword amongst the foe,
Has roused a breathing from alarm,
And half rolled back invasion's flow ;
Compelled to yield, though not to fly,
Has raised again the patriot cry,—
While scattered casques and turbans tell
His answer to the Arab yell.
Even the fell Hafed shuns his force,
And swerves into a safer course.
Twice pressed to earth, and twice again
Uprearing from the piles of slain,
He stands with dirt and gore all grim,
Pisa's last hopes all fixed on him :
Her arm goes with each blow he deals,
A panic strikes her when he reels.
“ Goldava ! ” is the incessant sound,
“ Support Goldava ! ” echoes round.

But as the hero's well plied brand,
Heaps carnage fast on every hand,
Suspends the battle's wavering chance,
And still retards the wild advance ;
A sudden blow, behind his guard,
Sent by the chieftain of the Sard,
Cuts the braced nerves—the sword arm drops,—
Where, Pisa, where are now thy hopes ?
Who now shall be thy battle's guide ?
Begirt with foes on every side,
Disarmed he stands—the final blow
Hangs on the raised arm of the foe.
To seal the great Goldava's doom,
Does that vile traitor then presume ?
He that was leader of the band,
To Pisa's walls from Pisa's strand ?
No! he was chieftain of an hour ;
But now submits to mightier power.
'Tis not Catalca—that hired thing !
'Tis he who hired—Sardinia's King !
It is Musetto's giant arm,
Uplifted in wrath's fiercest form !

VIII.

As some huge severed mountain rock,
Down tumbling with resistless sway,
Rends first the lesser trees away,
Then thunders on the giant oak;
And as the forest monarch falls,
Shedding its leafy honours round,
A thousand echoes ring the vales,
And crashing ruin spreads the ground :
So—sudden from the Pisan throng,
A black clad warrior sweeps along;
And ere yon arm its blow discharge—
While Pisa totters on fate's verge,—
Breaks through—beats down the hostile ring,
And bursts against the giant king.
'Neath the raised arm, the falchion's point
Seeks its way 'twixt the armour's joint;
From right to left, with forceful dart,
Bears through the ribs, the lungs, the heart.
Sudden the helm is forward thrown :
Burst blended, hiccup, sob, and groan,
Convulsed ; a moment, mid his bands
A huge and moveless trunk he stands ;

Then falls stone dead ; with such a sound
As shakes the stoutest hearts around.
So falls the monarch ! mingled cries
Of triumph, and despair arise.
So falls the monarch ! Pisa breathes,
And half her palm proud Victory wreathes.

IX.

Of this dread blow to mark the effects,
I ween there 's little time for pause :
The hand that thrust the sword, redraws ;
And ere the fear-struck foe collects,
Ere gleams a sword to avenge the blow,
Ere swells the chorus of despair,
That stranger's Land has worked a woe,
Will try the invaders to repair.
Onward it sped as it began,
And lopped like weeds man after man,
Till Pisa, rallying all her host,
Regained the ground she late had lost :
Till carnage piled her ghastly ridge,
A hecatomb athwart the bridge ;
Where the fallen king's uncoffined clay,
Buried beneath his subjects lay ;

Till mingling with the falling flood,
Half Pisa's kennels ran with blood,
And every street-pressed foot that night,
Bore marks of the insatiate fight!

X.

Now slackening combat gasps for breath;
Nor dares advance, nor dares retreat;
Until Catalca deems it meet,
One final chance for all or death.
He, ere Sardinia's monarch fell,
Had held a station in the rear.
Disguised he fights that none may tell;—
Nor is his name Catalca here;
'Tis Rillio—as a Spanish knight,
He comes to avenge an ancient spite;
And as he knew the soil of yore,
Has led the invaders from the shore;
And not a Sard nor Arab deems
That he is ought but what he seems.

XI.

Goldava still can cheer his band,
Albeit his sword-arm powerless lie,

Still can he wave his left on high ;
And he hath sworn an oath to stand.
In danger's hour there is a glow,
Which only generous breasts can feel ;
And which the selfish ne'er can know,
Howe'er intense their warlike zeal.
Brute feelings may brute courage have :
The generous are the truly brave.
Such was the glow within each breast,
When, as fight paused, Goldava pressed
The stranger's hand, while each glanced eye
Declared the stern resolve to die.
It was the glow of mutual faith,
Which only springs mid scenes of death.
As nature, in her boldest vein,
Puts forth her shoots of toughest grain ;
So—not where man in business met,
Pleasure, or show, or etiquette ;
'Tis where mind, highest wrought, presents
Soil worthy of such noble plants ;
'Tis where the field with armour rings—
'Tis there that lasting friendship springs !
Witness the pledge of ancient times :
Witness the bard's immortal rhymes ;

Witness that band, of Thebes the pride,
Who fell, like brothers, side by side.
Such moment, in an hour of strife,
Outweighs whole years of common life.
Brief was that moment, and the blast
Was rough that swept it to the past.

XII.

For, ere Goldava spoke, a cry
Responsive from the rearward rose,
Toward Catalca, where he chose
That signal his last chance to try.
“*Strike for Albino!*”—is the word:
(The stranger starts with quick surprise)
At once to front and rearward heard:
Like answering echo seems to rise—
“*Strike for Albino! Pisa down!*
“*Albino strike and win the town!*”
Confused, beset in front and rear;
Dumb with surprise, mistrust, and fear;
Expecting every shock to o’erwhelm,
Who now, shall take thy desperate helm?
Who, Pisa, now shall be thy guide,
And bid thee still in triumph ride?

Goldava maimed:—and all spell bound,
That stranger lists each answering sound.
Goldava lifts his voice on high :
“ Down, Pisans, down with treachery !
“ Oh ! Pisa, shall it then be said
“ Thou sunk'st by thine own hand betrayed ?
“ In vain Rhodoro's fall is mourned,
“ Whilst his brave bands are unreturned !
“ In vain displayed each pomp of grief,
“ For such an army, such a chief ;
“ Unless their absence, and his death
“ Be 'venged with this night's latest breath !
“ In vain we 've brought the murderer home,
“ To make more terrible his doom— ;
“ To-morrow fixed the trial day—
“ If Pisa falls this night a prey !
“ Strike for your country, Pisans all !
“ Remember great Rhodoro's fall !”
Had this speech not dissolved the spell
That bound the stranger,——comes a knell,
Resistless warning to his ear :
“ Guard well the front ; we 'll guard the rear !”
These words are followed by a shock,
All crashing like a falling rock ;

While thickening war, in iron tide,
Rolls its dark waves on every side;
And flying females mingle there,
Piercing the storm-distracted air;
And flashing torches sink and rise
One chaos all of death and noise:
But still one voice is loud and clear:
“ Guard well the front, we ’ll guard the rear;
“ For there is danger in the wind,
“ And foes before, and foes behind.”

XIII.

Now strife recloses in the van;
Shield rings on shield, brand shivers brand;
But ere Catalca’s traitor hand,
Has triumphed o’er one countryman;
Upon that ghastly corpse-piled ridge,
I trow he has the stranger met;
Their footing high above the bridge,
Near level with its parapet.
Like two huge pillars dark they stood,
Beetling o’er Arno’s midway flood.
Both swords, by one tremendous stroke,
Snap short. In hate’s embrace they yoke.

Short is their strife, when—hark ! a scream—
And plunge that startles Arno's stream :
Sudden those struggling forms are lost,
And nerveless stands each marvelling host ;
It seems as if the stroke of Heaven,
Those chieftains from the bridge had driven :
Stopped is the strife ; in mute surprise
Toward the dark stream are bent all eyes.

XIV.

Lo ! rapid from the crowd emerging,—
One spring, she's on the river's brink,—
Another, and past aid she 'll sink ;
But, ere that rash, that reckless virgin,
Has ta'en the fatal leap, a hand
Has grasped her flowing garments fold.
Albeit her frantic cries command
To quit ; it firmly keeps its hold.
Whom late we saw, sublime, inspired
By faith, by patriotism fired,—
High on yon tower—yon church before—
And traversing yon prison door—
Struggling on Arno's brink now stands,
And vainly spreads her desperate hands :

Herself, her country, all forgot,
All lost in one soul-whelming thought.
Through all the fury of the fight,
One form alone had fixed her sight :
High on the bridge that form she saw,
Grasping, and grasped by his worst foe ;
She saw them beetling o'er the wave :
She saw them fall ; that scream she gave ;
Ormasso knew what passions swayed
The breast of this enthusiast maid ;
And he had hovered anxious there,
Watching her with a father's care.

XV.

“ Oh ! save him ! ” cries she, “ Save ! oh save !
“ Ye coward Pisans ! can ye stand ?
“ And can ye hug yourselves at land,—
“ Your saviour in a watery grave ?
“ Leave me alone, old man !—I ’ll dive—
“ Leave me alone !—my heart ’s on flame—
“ Water to quench it ! !——or alive
“ Or dead, I ’ll be,——I ’ll be—with him ! ”
Exhausted in his arms she sank ;
He bears her lifeless from the bank ;

While, lo ! a wide scene-opening gleam
Displays two heads above the stream :
These dexterous swimmers then began
Such fight as ne'er was seen by man :
E'en fellest monsters of the deep,
Where boldest fancy scarce dares sweep,
Ne'er imaged forth to mortal sight,
So strange, so horrible a fight.
Oh ! but it was a fearful thing,
To see them grasp, and twine, and cling,
With speechless rage and breath in-held,
Their lion locks all horrid swelled ;
Till by fierce toil exhausted quite,
Thick mists spread o'er their fainting sight,
And both, perchance to Arno's bed,
Had sunk—without unlooked-for aid.

XVI.

When from the bridge they disappeared,
Exulting Hafed ruled the fight :
Jealous Catalca's rival might,
And well the strangers arm he feared.
Now when he sees the battle pause,
All eyes upon the river bent,

Through the piled dead he cautious draws,
 Winding his way with dark intent
(As winds through grass a snake) among
The wile-unpractised Pisan throng;
Then, sudden, his huge turbaned form,
Upreats; and whirls his thundering arm;
Each blow with gnashing fury deals,
While Pisa's opening battle reels.
Fast through the gap invasion bears,
The down-prest Pisans fall in layers;
On the scared rear fresh treachery springs;
And ruin laughs, and flaps his wings.
All now seems lost; and Pisa's hour
Fixed—fixed beyond redemption's power.

XVII.

But, hark!—a sound like iron feet,
 Loud on the pavement clattering near,
 Rapidly swelling on the ear,
Echoes from yon south Pisan-street.
 And hark! a voice loud bellowing forth;
(The effect is like a thousand drums,)
 “Rouse, Pisa! courage in the north
 “Here from the south your army comes!”

Full on the invaders rearward fight,
Bursts from that street the warrior sprite,
Trampling the battle down like grain,
That stands upon the teeming plain :
High borne its moonlike shield in air,
Throws round a pale portentous glare ;
While fast and wide its meteor lance
Doth like the forked lightning glance.
All faint with loss of blood and pale,
Goldava doth the signal hail,
Gathers his breath for one last cheer,
While Storgo foams along the rear.
“ O ! now for strength to wield a storm,—
“ For wrath that might an earthquake form,
“ Till freedom’s flood o’er treachery burst,
“ And vengeance saturate her thirst.
“ Rise, Pisa ! rise in all thy might !
“ Rise, and support thy guardian sprite !
“ Rise ! victory shines upon thy crest !
“ By favouring Heaven thy cause is blessed.”
So, ere he fell, Godalva spoke,
So Pisa’s energies rewoke.
Now, now her foes, like scared birds, fly,
As from some portent of the sky,

Along the quays on either side,
And o'er the bridge into the tide ;
Resistless panic seizes all,
And conscience aggravates their fall.

XVIII.

Brief is the course fell Hafed takes :
 Prone from the bridge, in mad despair,
 He darts ; and seeks the chieftains there ;
As o'er the stream his falchion shakes :
 Quick glancing through the watery track,
(Oh ! must the song such deeds record ?)
 Till close against the stranger's back,
The Arab points his vengeful sword.
But, lo ! down on his foul career,
Falls like a star the meteor spear,
Leaving its fleeting train of light,
To mark it from the warrior sprite,
Who plunging from south Pisa's quay,
Has dash'd on high the river spray.
Fierce o'er the gleaming watery plain,
Flows in dark curve the war-horse mane,
'Bove which, in horrid contrast held,
Glares ghost-like face, and moon-like shield.

From Hafed's back the spear comes drenched,
From his death-grasp the sword is wrenched;
I' the stranger's hand that sword is placed,
That spear points south—"There, stranger, haste!"
"Nor rest that sword till Pisa's woe
"Smile on the blood of her last foe."—
He spoke; and lent a ready hand,
To aid the stranger to the land;
Then turning dragg'd, with giant sway,
Catalca to the northern quay.
I deem Ormasso, there alone,
Unblanch'd, of all who look'd thereon;
While forth, this mandate dread, the sprite,
Loud thundering, vanish'd through the night;
"There! seize the traitor! Bind him hard;
"Till Heaven decree his just award;
"Till for his country's base betrayer,
"Its deepest tortures hell prepare.
The sprite is vanish'd! If by flood
Or storm, may not be understood.
But this I know; after the fight,
A warhorse bearing an arm'd knight,
Was seen below the town's west flank,
Climbing the Arno's northern bank:

All dripping from the flood it came,
But there was seen no ghastly flame.
Battle is o'er; Invasion slain;
Death rests; and Pisa sleeps again.

CANTO V.

THE ESCAPE.

*Dio, che spesso gl' innocenti aiuta,
Ne lascia mai chi in sua bontà si fida.*——Ariosto.

You shall think the devil is come from hell—*Shakspeare.*

I.

SLOW struggles the dawn, through the storm of the
night,

Rugged and black o'er the Apennine's cast,
And down on the bloody remains of the fight,

The new-risen morning looks pallid and ghast.
Hushed again is the city: its denizens laid
In toil-compelled slumber, save one 'mid the dead,
On the carnage-piled bridge 'tis the sole thing of life,
Where he stands like a blood-spattered fiend of the
strife,

Arrayed in the armour that mid battle's yell,
Showed like doom to the foe when the Sard monarch fell.

But does that black armour the patriot enclose,
Who, tracing to conquest his bloody track, rose
'Twixt fate and Goldava : far otherwise ! now
The morion encircles a traitor's dark brow.

II.

Even now have I traced from the prison his flight,
As hastily drawing his black vizor down,
While his eye seemed to scare at the day-pearing light,
Forth cautious he ventured to traverse the town.
He scarce o'er the slain-covered bridge makes his path,
And pausing, he gazes all terror-struck there,
Aghast on the fixed and cold features of death,
And the motionless eyes that on him seem to glare,
As if every corpse up around him would start,
(For he feels all alike are the foes of his heart,)
In fearful reproach of that treacherous deed,
Which untimely in slaughter had caused them to bleed
'Mid the tumult of night, not so reckless his tread,
When he fought on that heap, as 'tis now full of dread ;
While the faint light of dawn shews all clotted with gore,
Their arms and their garments all shattered and tore,
Who so late glowed with life, and shone proud in their
mail,
Now prostrate, and haggard, and beamless, and pale :

Those forms which so late 'gainst his country he drew,
Piled in slaughter with those whom from childhood he
knew.

III.

As he looks on the scene, peals a voice on his ear,
“See, traitor, the fruits of thy demon career !”
He starts ! all is silent : he hears not a breath.
He glances around : he sees nothing but death.
He moves slowly onward. The voice peals again :
“Turn, traitor, and look on thy countrymen slain.”
He turns—from the death-heap up-rears on his view—
What spectre is that (can his vision be true ?)
With the armour he wore, and the dagger he clenched,
When the victim’s blood flowed, and his bright eye was
quenched ?
“Behold me the sprite of thy conscience appear !
“For ever I’ll haunt thee, for ever be near,
“Till from thine own dagger these blood-coloured stains,
“Be effaced by the life-stream that flows through thy
veins.”
“Go, spawn of the darkness, avaunt from my sight !
“How darest thou appear on the precincts of day ?”
“Because thou has broke from thy prison, from night

“ (My prison) I come forth to mar thy foul way.
“ Thou canst not escape me : where’er thy retreat
“ Shall conscience make deeper thy pang of defeat !
“ By its guilt-scourging power, on thy feverish eye
“ This picture of carnage removeless shall lie,
“ Till fancy, diseased and made mad by the theme,
“ Shall mingle its horrors in each future dream ;
“ ’Mid earth’s direst scenes, ’t will be direst of all,
“ And in hell, ’t will itself be a hell in thy soul.”

IV.

All cold is the shudder that runs through the heart
Of the traitor ; yet still from his eyes darts a glare,
While reckless thoughts o’er him stern calmness impart,
As he speaks forth in all the wild strength of despair
“ Be thou, cursed sprite, from the living or dead,
“ Thy threatenings I fear not.” And fierce as he said,
His falchion high waving. But ere falls the stroke,
Out bursts from the spectre, in sulphurous smoke,
A flame that appears like a hell-blast to scorch.
He flies. When he enters conspiracy’s porch,
His wildness of aspect and tremor of limb,
Are witnesses strikingly awful in him,
That need little aid of his parched tongue to tell
The things he encounter’d of death and of hell.

V.

The clouds of the night-storm have all pass'd away,
Distinct are the mountains, serene is the day ;
The vast dome of heaven is one cloudless blue
O'er the variegate richness of earth's autumn hue.
The tempest is passed ! All is cheerful again,
Save where the effects of man's passions remain :
Where, mid the swoln stream, 'twixt the sea and the town,
The invaders' dead bodies are slow drifting down ;
And where through the streets, on the bridge and the
 quays,
The blood-spots are blackening, in noon's fervid rays ;
Save where each fallen patriot, in winding sheet, low
On the battle-spot rests,—till in funeral show
All are borne forth with chants of praise, triumph, and
 woe.

And save where, pale, blood-stain'd, distract, disarray'd,
The victim of him who his country betray'd—
His country !—thy country, thy life's dearest ties—
The friend of thy childhood, O Chinzica, lies.
Thy tears and thy smiles with sweet solace have beam'd,
Where the flames and the daggers of rapine had gleam'd ;
Now all that thy tenderest sympathy frames,
The friend of thy childhood, O Chinzica ! claims.

VI.

Yet nor grief nor surprise fix'd the maiden, nor e'en
A start nor a tear-drop disturb'd her still mien ;
But moving all noiseless, as deep ocean-wave
When the wild winds are hush'd, balmy succour she gave.
And it was not till, ceased from her mournful employ,
She sat watching the wan cheek, and wild restless eye,
And the sweet voice that warbled her lost brother's name,
It was not till then, tears of sympathy came :
Beneath her dark eye-lash they silently crept ;
'Twas then,—it was not till then, Chinzica wept.

“ Rhodoro, Rhodoro, where art thou, my love ?

“ The tears of compassion that gush'd from thine eyes

“ Have floated my soul to the regions above,

“ And left my poor body a prey to its sighs.

“ Foul was the traitor that sullied thy truth,

“ Thy truth that was pure as the fountain of day !

“ Foul was the traitor that stole on my youth

“ And broke thy lov'd image and cast it away.

“ The day of thy beauty is o'er ;

“ The worm may go fatten on love,

“ Thy cheeks they shall dimple no more,
“ Nor thine eyes be the stars from above.

“ Thy lips that were once ruby bright,
“ Are now the sad colour of lead ;
“ And thy neck and thy brow ivory white,
“ Are now like the bones of the dead.

“ The flowers of the field are wither’d,
“ The leaves of the forest are dropp’d,
“ The blessings of Heaven are gather’d,
“ And the souls of the wicked are cropp’d.

“ The frog-spawn hath blacken’d the pool,
“ The torrent hath broke down its bed,
“ The lamb hath been shorn of its wool,
“ And the churchyard hath cast up its dead.

“ Ask no more for me, lady !

“ Ask no more for me :

“ For the chill blast of night

“ Makes the mountain-top white,

“ And the lightning scathes the mountain tree.

“ Ask no more for me, lady !

“ Ask no more for me !
“ For the chill blast of day,
“ Makes the green head grey ;
“ And grief scathes the heart like the mountain tree.

VII.

More intently bend Chinzica's mild dark eyes,
As pauses the soft wild warble of the song ;
More intently she watches each sound as it flies,
As song, with speech blending, moves wilder along ;
While o'er the pale features intelligence plays,
As glance on the waters the moon's broken rays ;
And crossing and mingling in flashes of light,
Dark passions seem fitting like shadows of night.

“ O lady ! a dream I have had,
“ Of midnight flames, and barbarous men !
“ Forth I fled
“ From a burning bed,—
“ And, oh ! what happened then ?
“ The devil grasped me round and round,
“ And gave my breast a ghastly wound,
“ And hurled me madly to the ground,
“ And there I lay as dead.

- “ Then all was dark, and all I heard,
“ Was the noise of demons that round me roared ;
“ Till an angel dight
“ In armour bright,
“ Did gallantly by me alight
“ In the torrent where I lay, lady.
“ And when he laid me here to rest,
“ He softly staunch’d my bleeding breast,
“ And tenderly my hand he pressed
“ Before he bid good-day, lady ! ˘

VIII.

With gentle pressure of the hand,
That friendship well might understand,
And accents friendship well might know,
Chinzica seeks her tale of woe.
But friendship’s touch and friendship’s tone,
Alike unmarked, alike unknown,
Seem, while with look both vague and sly,
Lomilla chants her wild reply :

- “ On the spire of the steeple,
“ The cock’s crest shined ;
“ Till it lost its glitter,

“ By the change of the wind,
“ There’s a bird in the air,
“ There’s a fish in the sea ;
“ And the fish and the bird
“ Will come at a word ;
“ And the bird and the fish
“ Will come at a wish ;
“ But I’ll not tell the secret to thee, lady !
“ I’ll not tell the secret to thee.

“ There is a stone on the ground ;
“ There is a flower on the tree ;
“ And the stone and the flower
“ Submit to my power ;
“ And the flower and the stone
“ Submit to my throne ;
“ But I’ll not tell the secret to thee, lady :
“ I’ll not tell the secret to thee.
“ For the bird is a dove,
“ And that is my love,
“ The fish is a shark,
“ That bites in the dark ;
“ The stone is a mill-stone to hang round my neck,
“ And the flower amaranthine my bosom to deck.

“ My love is in the sky,
“ And my husband in the deep;
“ And still can I
“ My secret keep.
“ Lo ! I am chosen from among
“ All those on earth who dwell;
“ For marriages are made in heaven,
“ But mine was made in hell;
“ And Satan, as my wedded lord,
“ Usurps the sov'reign right;
“ And with his sword
“ My bosom gored,
“ For my love of an angel bright.
“ O ! come, bright angel !
“ With thy sword of flame,
“ Cut through the hellish knot
“ Absolve me from its lot,
“ And dash dishonour's blot
“ From my virgin fame.”

IX.

Lomilla paused—then with a start,
And angry glance that seem'd to dart
In sudden meaning through her eyes,

“ Who art thou ? who art thou ? who art thou ? ”

she cries.

“ Chinzica,” soft the maid replies.

“ Chinzica !—ah !—I knew thee once ;

“ Ere beauty was a false pretence.

“ E’en now, e’en now, I see my spouse,

“ Wreathing his snaky volumes there,

“ Around thy fair and smiling brows,

“ And through thy dark and gloomy hair.

“ But ere moon change,

“ Comes my revenge !

“ Thy lover and thy brother feel

“ The force of my avenging steel !

“ And for the mate

“ You sought to late,

“ Before you won, I wedded him,

“ And set thy teeth to gnash in envious hate !

“ ’Twas then, ’twas then, you set him on,

“ To bite at his own flesh !—within this hour

“ I met him coming from thy tower !—

“ Catalca stabbed me.—But, anon

“ Rhodoro comes—whom I had sent to heaven !

“ Begirt with radiant flame,

“ In angel form he came,

“ To tell me—all my sins would be forgiven !

“ And I ’ll redeem the sinful past,

“ With potent charm and spell,

“ With relic rare, penance and prayer,—

“ And every bead I ’ll tell.”

The wild song has ceased ; but her lips moving on,

Seem silent over something intently to con ;

Whilst her small nimble fingers busily run,

As if counting over her beads one by one,

Till she gradually sinks to the dotage of those,

Whose state feebly vibrates ’twixt waking and
repose.

’Tis then that Chinzica ventures to glide

From the spot where she watch’d by her poor
friend’s side.

X.

In the climes of the warm breathing south there’s an hour,

When the sun riding fiercely from noon to the west,

Life stagnates beneath its enervating power,

And day in the stillness of night seems to rest ;

When labour and pastime and strife all are laid,

In torpor and listlessness under the shade.

Such now is that hour within Pisa’s wall,

Where burning—and silent and fierce as that hour,
Is the traitor who steals into Chinzica's hall,
Is the traitor who steals into Chinzica's tower.
Deep from day's fervid glare is the spacious room,
And scarce hath night's aspect a murkier gloom,
Dark the woe and war symbols the walls that invest,
And dark the wolf hides where the fair maid doth rest.

XI.

His powerful grasp, like leaden chill,
Benumbs ; nor strives she for release ;
Surprise and horror hold her still ;
Her very breathing seems to cease.
That traitor-form, which on her eye
Had been impressed so painfully,
And through the darkness of the night
So often had appalled her sight,
At once through all its changed disguise
The affrighted maid can recognise.

XII.

But other feelings followed fear,
When low and rapid on her ear,
His fearful menace came ;

Changing, like sudden burst of light
Streaming along on Alpine height,

Her cheek from snow to flame.

“ If Albino’s blood be shed,

“ Be that blood upon thy head,

“ Thou alone canst set him free :

“ Albino’s life depends on thee.”

Catalca pauses as to trace,

The sudden radiance of her face ;

Then adds :—“ That life depends on me ;

“ And I fair maid depend on thee.”

Her blush is but a transient glow,

That ghastlier leaves the cheek of snow :

A thousand phantoms whirl her brain,

Her heart a thousand terrors fill,

She strives for utterance,—strives in vain,

And fainting falls, in death-like chill.

XIII.

A mountain pine by tempest felled

Sudden uprearing to the skies,

He had not with more awe beheld

Than now he sees the maiden rise.

Did sense of danger, like a spell,

So suddenly revive the maid ?
Or did the prayer, breathed as she fell,
Obtain from heaven its timely aid ?

XIV.

'Tis not for faith to urge a claim
To wealth or beauty, power or fame ;
But humbly ask, nor dread denial,
Strength to support each earthly trial.
The apathy that hardly lives,
The reckless fierceness passion gives,
The bravery honour bids us wear,
The wretched courage of despair ;
What are all these, amid life's woes,
The field ; the scaffold ; dungeon ; stake ;
The bodily, the mental ache—
Oh what to constancy, that flows
From heaven !—to strength that faith bestows !

XV.

Now from her eyes the unwonted blaze
Repressed the awe-struck traitor's gaze,
While, as if Virtue Vice address'd,
The indignant maid her thoughts expressed :

“ No ! it boots not what that may be,
“ Which hangs alone on thee and me,
“ For deem not Chinzica would ask
“ Catalca’s aid in any task ;
“ Far less in one that might impart
“ Base sanction to clandestine art :
“ To compromise in one dark shame
“ A virgin’s with a murderer’s fame.”
“ What mean’st thou, maid ?” Catalca cried,
“ Reddening in wrath,—“ What’s hence implied ?”
“ I mean, that if Albino’s guilt
“ Demand that blood for blood be spilt,
“ Not Chinzica’s tenderness may save
“ Life so dishonoured from the grave.
“ I mean, if Innocence declare
“ Itself to all in trial fair,
“ Not Pisa’s justice may consign
“ His fate to powers like thine and mine.
“ I mean, if public right preclude
“ My succour for Albino’s good,
“ That not Catalca’s threat’ning art
“ May fright me to so base a part.
“ As one rude blast destroys the flower
“ That blooms in Innocence’s bower ;

“ As herb escapes not without scath
“ When rudely trodden to the path ;
“ The honour of a Pisan maid
“ Brooks not where lawless steps invade :
“ This well thou knowest ! Go ! tempter, go !
“ Chinzica scorns thy ends to know.”

XVI.

The cold chaste grandeur of her air,
The look that soared above despair,
 The boldness of her speech,
Perhaps had checked the fiend's address,
Had quelled the thought of rude caress,
But for the dazzling loveliness
 That shone within his reach.
The heavenly face, the graceful neck,
 The form so stately, yet so light,
The hair whose dark brown ringlets thick,
 Shaded a skin of snowy white.
No power of virtue could control
The raging fire within his soul ;
Which, flashing through his eye-balls, broke
As from volcanoes while he spoke :

“ Rash maid ! false virtue and blind hate,
“ Will bring repentance when too late ;
“ When thou shalt thy lost lover mourn,
“ As guiltless as a thing unborn.
“ I swear by every drop of blood,
“ On Pisa’s bridge that last night flowed ;
“ And by the crimson hue that dyed,
“ As morning dawned, the Arno’s tide !
“ Maiden, I swear, so sure as thou
“ Rejectest the love, I here avow,
“ So sure shall guiltless blood be shed,
“ So sure that blood be on thy head.

XVII.

What deems the maid of hardened guilt
That swears by blood itself hath spilt,
Remorseless swearing more to shed
And charge it on another’s head,
I know not.—But she may not choose,
(The vengeful monster ranging loose,)
Herself beneath his very claws,
His guilt and treachery to expose.
With what ingenious grace of mind,
Is shewn the love of woman-kind ;

Scarce one allusion in her speech,
Doth to her lover's danger reach.
Not even she names him; yet at once
Loquacious grows in his defence;
To gain him time, now her sole chance!

XVIII.

Calm she replied; "Is love array'd
" In threats like these, and thus conveyed?
" Go bind the winds, or bid them veer,
" The ocean smooth, the earth unsphere;
" But seek not love with force or fear!"

" Lady, thou knowest how oft in vain,
" I've tried thy haughty love to gain;
" I've tried by every soft address;
" — You spurned my very humbleness!
" Now that a bolder flight, I've tried,
" More insolent is grown thy pride.
" But since, nor tenderness, nor force,
" Nor fear, affects thy proud love's course
" Less easy to obtain, than bind
" The earth, the ocean, or the wind;
" Then love I scorn! and hark! proud maid,
" Thus I retort thy rhodomontade:

“ Go drown the fire that shakes the earth
“ That labouring gives a mountain birth ;
“ Go quell the lightning, furious driven
“ Athwart the scowling face of heaven ;
“ Go quench the sun, and even hell-fire ;
“ But think not to restrain desire !
“ Desire like mine nought can remove !
“ Thy *love* I scorn—thy puling love !
“ Enough for me, this burning hour,
“ Thy *beauty* is within my power !

XIX.

The maid with deep and solemn tone,
And still sublimity of look,
Replied.—But ere her speech was done,
With awful energy she shook ;
Till the traitor’s fire seemed half subdued,
And on his brow the cold drops stood.
“ Catalca, pause !—Though nor remorse,
“ Pity, nor fear can change thy course ;
“ Yet pause, till interest may declare,
“ What best to shun, what best to dare.
“ When God first formed this world for man,
“ ’Twas sin that marred the perfect plan.

- “ Though mortal made, yet as doth wane
“ The moon, life wanes to fill again.
“ The germ of life, if through all space
“ Unchecked, would run eternal race :
“ Were all so still that mortal ears,
“ Might hear the music of the spheres,
“ Were all so still,—the ocean-surge,
“ Nay, even the lightest sound, might urge
“ Vibration to earth’s farthest verge.
“ So feeblest species issuing forth,
“ In time might thus o’er-run the earth.
“ If mortal life against control
“ So bursts ; what must the immortal soul,
“ When all its wild and lawless fire
“ Springs from a long-indulged desire ?
“ How glorious then must be that force
“ Which rules such passions in their course !
“ How worthier far Catalca’s reach ;
“ How worthier far his powers of speech ;
“ Than that low passion’s fiercest flame,
“ Which even to own is nature’s shame !
“ As much more worthy as heaven’s hand
“ Is than the storm that sweeps the land ;

“ As much more worthy as heaven’s rod
“ Is than the world beneath its nod ;
“ As much more worthy as heaven’s King
“ Is over all created thing !

XX.

“ ’Twixt Julian’s hill, and Serchio’s shore,
“ Where murderous band did on thee pour,
“ My brother rescued thee. Ye seemed
“ Thence knit in friendship ! so were deemed.
“ He bade you to our home ; you came.
“ ’Twas then I first felt that soft flame
“ Of friendship, which within my breast
“ Might still have glowed, hadst thou possessed
“ One spark of that pure love, which, now
“ So fiercely thou dost disavow.
“ Catalca, pause ! until, at least
“ Thou counsellest thine interest !
“ Catalca, pause ! Heaven can bestow,
“ For sinful moments, years of woe.
“ Catalca, pause ! for by that Power
“ That guards the weak in neediest hour !
“ I do defy thy demon ire !
“ Thy bitter scorn ! thy gross desire !”

XXI.

At first he spoke, like culprit awed,
Till passion flung his fears abroad ;
And his wild looks like furnace glowed ;
“ Lady ! thy pardon might be given
“ To one by thee to madness driven.
“ The film-threads of distempered sight,
“ To the clear gaze of eyes like thine,
“ Are not more feeble and unbright,
“ Than is Albino’s love to mine.
“ By every power of heaven, and hell,
“ And earth, I ’ve tried the power to quell
“ Thy charms have o’er me ; but in vain !
“ They rush like frenzy through my brain ;
“ Like flame they through my vitals dart,
“ Till each nerve quivers to the smart ;
“ And every sense is wrapped in blaze,
“ And all are lost in one vast gaze.
“ Sooner than lose these charms divine,
“ If all heaven rose to mar my grasp,
“ Thy heart’s blood would I mix with mine,
“ And hug thee to my latest gasp.
“ Behold *the dagger* which I draw ;
“ Receive me, or receive *that law* !

“ Nay!—now too late! there’s no reprieve!

“ No, proud maid, *both* thou must receive,

“ First, my embrace; and, then, the blow;

“ I’ll laugh to see thy cold blood flow;

“ And as it reddens o’er thy charms,

“ I’ll splash and revel in thine arms.”

“ Hold, traitor! lest, roused by my cries,

“ My household to mine aid arise.”

“ Deemest thou of help? alas! poor maid!

“ Wouldst thou thy household to thy aid?

“ —— Thy cries may not awake the dead,

“ Or reach them, where they now are laid!!”

XXII.

This was more than the maid could bear.

’Twas horrible to see the glare

That maddened o’er her as she fell.

But ere he stooped to seize his prey

A shriek that might have startled hell,

Rung to his soul and marred his way.

He started round; with blood-splashed hair,

Dishevelled o’er her, seemed to stand

The ghost-like form of that lost fair,
That sank last night beneath his brand.
And near her stood with aspect stern
The figure that had made him turn
And fly the bridge. And forth it drew
The well-known dagger to his view.
“ Now for the courage that defies,
“ In impious wrath, all heaven to rise !”
The armed figure said, and rushed—
Catalca fled ; and all was hushed.
These were the last sounds : “ Traitor ! twice,
“ Thou hast escaped——*beware of thrice !*

CANTO VI.

THE CONSPIRACY.

Come sono inganate le persone.—Petrarch.

Bloody treason flourished over us.—*Shakspeare.*

I.

WHEN the maid woke to sense, to pain,
In life's sad consciousness again,
And looked forth with a wildered air,
'Twas Storgo, not Catalca, there :
There, watching anxious by her side,
Kneeling upon the dark wolf-hide.
The sudden gush of pleased surprise
That lighted up the maiden's eyes,
Was answered by a look as glad,
From the wild snow-besprinkled head ;
On which grim spots of blood appeared,
Clotting its matted locks and beard.

II.

The old man marked her countenance,
As back she drew her startled glance ;
“ Lady, I may not wash away
“ The relicts of the last night’s fray
“ Till that on which they rest be shorn ;
“ Until the vengeance I have sworn,
“ Be wreaked upon that traitor’s head,
“ By whom my master’s blood was shed.”

“ Hold ! Storgo, lest while thou dost swear,
“ Thyself be in the traitor’s snare,
“ Even now, even there, where thou dost kneel,
“ Mine eyes beheld the assassin steel ;
“ And I had sunk beneath the blade,
“ But for heaven’s interposing aid.”

III.

Storgo looked round with start of fear :
“ No, lady; there is nothing here.
“ Yet well I know how treachery works ;
“ Still near his prey the tiger lurks ;
“ Conspiracy still dark, and deep,
“ Silent on bloody claws doth creep ;

“ Our country’s cause wants strength and skill ;
“ And, lady, there is danger still.
“ I know I ’m but a slave redeemed,
“ And ne’er of warlike fame have dreamed ;
“ I know it lady, and though all
“ From Pisa and from thee may fall ;
“ Yet, by that power to man’s breast given,
“ To echo back the voice of heaven ;
“ To the last drop shall Storgo stand,
“ For thee and for his native land !
“ But, lady, I must shun the day ;
“ And, like our foes, in secret lay.
“ Albeit the trial deferred, come on :
“ Still, lady, I the day must shun.
“ But though no testimony I,
“ That may Albino’s guilt deny ;
“ Perchance an evidence I ’ll send,
“ That better may his cause defend.”

IV.

The wide exulting glare of joy,
Forth darting from the old man’s eye,
To these last accents deep and hoarse,
Lent fearful and mysterious force.

Chinzica, as forbreath she heaves,
Half rising from where late she fell,
Grasps with both hands his garment's sleeves,
And pausing, bound in passion's spell,
Reads with keen looks, as if to trace
Strange meanings in his hair-grown face.
"Speak ! Storgo, speak !—I must—I must
" Know all ; all pends on mutual trust.
" Speak, Storgo, speak !—all, all relate !
" What mean these mysteries of fate ?
" Friendship betrayed ? the assassin blow ?
" The warning ? war sprite ? secret foe ?
" All—all seem linked in one dark chain.
" Speak, Storgo, and relieve my brain !"—

V.

" Lady, when I have ought to say
" Heeds me alone, I'm clear as day ;
" But when my thoughts touch others' right,
" Then, lady, I am dark as night.
" What though not bound by form of oath,
" Nor to loquacious cheer unloth ;
" 'Twere better speech for ever stint
" Than risk a friend by lightest hint.

“ Lady, I ’m blunt ;—and let no sense
“ Of my rude utterance bear offence.
“ Those most who boast they ne’er betray,
“ Are daily recreants to their trust :
“ Sooner would I, than tread such way,
“ Be smothered in eternal dust.
“ Such are who, conscience’ eye to blind,
“ Shew nothing straight, but all things bind
“ In crooked phrases ; and disguise
“ Friends’ secrets in their own surmise ;
“ Who through the ground insidious wind,
“ Leaving, like moles, black heaps behind.
“ But, lady, though the time not come,
“ Bid me to what thou ask’st be dumb ;
“ I have a tale to ease thy heart,
“ And glimmerings of hope impart.
“ Albino safe ; and, at this hour,
“ Beyond Catalca’s ruffian power ;
“ In dungeon, calm doth trial wait,
“ Dreadless of foeman’s secret hate.”

VI.

The garment sleeves are now forsook ;
She clasps her hands ; uplifts her look ;

A moment seems high heaven to scan,
Then turns to mark the aged man.
“ Lady amid the fight didst hear,
“ When battle clashed upon our rear,
“ The traitors for Albino cry ?
“ ’Twas plot ! ’twas damned conspiracy !
“ Their drift was clear ; ’twas him to feign
“ Their leader. We must plot again !
“ A double string to that fell bow
“ The ’ve bent—to lay Albino low ;
“ But, lady, we must plot again
“ And cut the double string in twain.”

VII.

“ Storgo, beware, lest plotting lead
“ Where heaven may disapprove the deed.
“ Better to fall by wicked art,
“ Than triumph in a wicked part.
“ No end, albeit on virtue’s side,
“ E’er evil means hath justified.
“ To human sense, whose view confined,
“ Compared to heaven’s vast scope, is blind,
“ Wrongful must that be understood,
“ Where certain ill brings doubtful good.

“ From age to age, more frail and frail
“ Hath mankind been e’er since the fall.
“ From that sad source corruption rose,
“ Which like a river widening flows ;
“ Against whose mortal influence
“ Heaven’s wisdom is the sole defence.”

“ Then, lady, I to heaven must pray
“ For what alone may guide my way.”

VIII.

“ Storgo, the way that heaven hath laid
“ Is plain : there only let us tread !
“ Nor seek to go that devious round,
“ Where falsehood and deceit abound ;
“ Trusting to our own narrow sense,
“ And narrower experience ;
“ Daring to measure with such rod,
“ The inscrutable designs of God.”

“ But, lady, if life’s thorny course,
“ Be set with snares and hostile force ;
“ Must we unarmed and barefoot walk,
“ Nor force nor snare attempt to baulk ?

“ Shall we not art to art oppose,
“ But passive yield to wily foes ;
“ Alone to heaven send suppliant cries,
“ Nor use that power which heaven supplies ?
“ If heaven act here by mortal means,
“ Shall villains only rule the scenes ;
“ Nor they whose breasts hold honest hearts
“ Have likewise room to play their parts ?
“ If villains plot, shall we connive,
“ And let the treason hatch and hive ?
“ What ! shall thy household feed the wave,
“ When nought but counterplot may save ?”

IX.

In vain her tongue would have expressed
The feelings thronging in her breast :
Her wildered judgment—doubt—belief—
Unlooked for hope !—her words were brief :
“ Heaven prosper—judge—guide thee, old man !
“ ’Tis not for me thy steps to scan.”

“ Lady, I came to ease thy mind,
“ Be watchfull still,—yet still seem blind.
“ Be still to thee thy household dead.
“ One plot or other thou must aid.

- “ In civil war, though all be loth,—
“ Friends to no side are foes to both.
“ And I’ve heard say, who with hell’s brood
“ Keep faith, are faithless to the good.
“ If heaven enacted by caprice,
 “ And nature’s laws changed every hour,
“ Instinct from errors ne’er would cease,
 “ And worse than mocked be reason’s power.
“ Yet nature deviates from her wont
“ To make for sin a punishment.
“ Is man from swerving then debarred,
“ When treachery can but thus be marred ?
“ Lady, shall not that Power who bade
“ The Red Sea be an ambuscade,
“ When Israel past, and Egypt’s host,
“ Beneath the ingulphing wave was lost :
“ Who bade the sun and moon until
“ The lengthened fight was done, stand still ;
“ Who angels bade wear man’s disguise,
“ And innocence be serpent wise ;
“ Say shall that Power not sanction those
“ Who but deceive their country’s foes ?
“ Our plots like mouse-traps can but act
“ On things engaged in lawless fact :

“ And albeit baits are placed within
“ To tempt as well as punish sin,
“ Whoever held the wild belief,
“ A mouse-trap made a mouse a thief;
“ By holding forth a part as lure,
“ To draw thieves from the general store ?
“ But, lady, hear my tale ; then trow,
“ If aught but plots can save us now.”—
Here Storgo paused,—In deep regard
The maid sat fixed ;—but spake no word.

X.

The Tale commenced.

Lady, the best of friends may jar ;
But if they come to deadly war,
Be sure the devil is not far ;
And both are led by falsehood's arts,
To play false to their own true hearts.
Nature is weak, and passion strong,
And easy 'tis to widen wrong.
Albeit such arts failed not attend
My master's quarrel with his friend ;

To make it mortal had defied
Even Satan's worst, 'twixt friends so tried ;
And this too well the assassins knew.—
“ Then Storgo, was the quarrel true ?”
“ Ay, lady !” (answers Storgo,) “ loth
“ Am I to witness against both ;
“ The quarrel had indeed a look
“ The devil might grin at from his nook ;
“ For, though not present, well I heard,
“ Through the tent walls, each angry word.

XI.

It was a mild, calm, summer night :
I could have roared in very spite,
That friendship of so firm a stamp,
Should seem so weak to all the camp.
For, thick as toadstools on the ground,
Eavesdroppers grew to catch each sound.
Idly the miscreants seemed to lie,
Tracing the stars along the sky ;
But far from stars was their intent,
As themselves from the firmament.
I jarred the stillness which they kept,
And oft, as angry sounds o'erleapt
The noise I made, in rage I wept—

}

To think how devils had the power,
To harvest in the unguarded hour.
This nest of treachery oft I'd watched,
In hopes to crush the brood ere hatched.

" But, Storgo, had it not been best
" To 've told the chiefs of this foul nest ?"

" The chiefs, lady ? what chiefs ? what chief
" Would grant a slave like me belief ?
" One deemed a mere half-witted elf,
" Bid a house rise against itself ?
" Would thy brave brother e'er believe
" Guasto, his second, could deceive ?"

XII.

" Guasto !—Lomilla's brother !—He
" A traitor ?——Oh, it cannot be !—
" Guasto, renowned as ivy staunch,
" That clasps the ruin with its branch !
" Would he conspire to crush that voice
" That called him to the people's choice ?
" Or e'er help to pluck down that power,
" By which himself plucked fortune's flower ?

“ Or e’er attempt to sink that name,
“ By which his own had risen to fame ?
“ Could he seek to destroy that life,
“ By which his own was saved ’mid strife ?
“ To credit this, methinks, were past
“ The utmost stretch of honour’s cast !”

“ Is ’t wonder then my tongue was still ;
And that Rhodoro dreamed no ill ?
But hear me, lady. I could mark
The grin of Guasto through the dark ;
His broad white teeth was mark most fair,
His wide eyes flashing tiger glare.
At the tent door, he seemed to curb
His footsteps, fearing to disturb.
He paused—retired. But when was gone
Albino ; and the chief alone ;
Guasto returned, and I did hear
Half whispered words that stirred my fear ;
Something of meeting at day-break ;
A message Guasto was to take,
Who therewith parting straight,—I thought
To dog his heels, but back was brought.

XIII.

Rhodoro called to bid me ride,
Where far on Mongibello's side,
A lonely hermit did abide ;
Beneath the forest's darkest shade,
In cavern 'twixt huge hills embayed :
Forest that seemed by nature placed
As girdle to the mountain's waist :
Huge hills that rose like warts around
The vast wide-based far spreading mound.

XIV.

He came none knew whence ; far and near,
The countries round did him revere.
All things above, upon, below
The earth, this old man seemed to know.
His searching spirit seemed to pore
Through nature to its very core ;
He knew all uses near and far,
From wasteful weed to wandering star ;
And cunning rhymes he had on all,
To make them answer to his call.

XV.

Near half the night I rapid rode ;
When tired I reached his wild abode,
Told in brief terms my master's need,
He bade me come where he should lead :
So strange the scene I passed with him,
I soon forgot my wearied limb.
Far under ground we went where ray
Of light was none, from fire or day ;
But only such there coldly shone,
As of from rotten wood, or bone,
The moon—a glow-worm—or the spark
Struck from the keel-ploughed sea by dark ;
Or rather such as if one glare
Were mixed of all these cold lights there.

XVI.

In spacious subterranean room,
Capped by a lofty form of dome,
By viewless chain, hung moon-like ball,
Shedding its ghastly light o'er all.
Things stuffed, of every kind seemed there,
That live on earth, in sea, and air,

From hugest monsters of the deep
To smallest tribes that fly and creep.
Of every kind a skeleton ;
Each kind of plant, earth, metal, stone ;
And every extract art could draw
By restless toil therefrom, I saw :
In many coloured rows, all seen
Glistening beneath the ghastly sheen ;
All which, the hermit said, were store,
For works of scientific lore,
Which in these caverns refuge sought,
In times with persecution fraught.

XVII.

Then stopping short and turning round ;—
—— “ But thou ’rt on other errand bound !
“ Thy master deems he is betrayed,
“ And asks my counsel and my aid.
“ He asks too late, e’en now he lies
“ Begirt with foes ;—perhaps he dies.
“ Nay more ;” (disclosing, as he said,
A prostrate form)—“ perhaps he ’s dead !”
I looked : before me seemed to lay
My master, stiff and cold as clay.

XVIII.

Lady, I need not tell of now,
The drops that started on my brow ;
How my hair bristled : and how cold
My blood ran ; nor boots now be told
Of all I did and thought and felt ;—
My hand was on my falchion's hilt,—
Mine eye glanced round its mark to find,—
When sudden, as if struck stone-blind.
A total darkness o'er me came ;
Quenched was the ball of ghastly flame ;
And I did stand as in a trance,
Nor sight nor sound to rouse my sense ;
But all so still and dark, I thought ;
As if I 'd been crushed into nought ;
Till sudden through eight openings wide
'Peared gleaming vaults on every side,
Which, far diverging through the gloom,
Branched like an ancient catacomb.
Along each vault, on either hand,
A rank of spectres seemed to stand :
Some robed ; some armed with shield, and spear,
And helm : all shedding light so drear,

As 'twere a grand procession show
Assembled by the powers below.
O'er each spear arm hung bridle-bit ;
A fiercer glare was cast from it.
In long perspectives all arrayed,
Straight as a temple's colonnade
They seemed to stand, ghost beyond ghost
Far lessening till the sight was lost.

XIX.

Lady, I marvel not to spy
The creedless aspect of thine eye ;
For by my faith, in holy law,
Myself scarce believed what I saw.
As round my senses dizzy flew,
From avenue to avenue.
At once the branches closing round—
And all again in darkness bound—
Forth, clad in robes of ghastly light,
The hermit stood before my sight.
This more appalled me than the host ;
My tongue cleaved, and my voice was lost ;
Till with Heaven's name I strove to arm
Its power against unholy charm :

I crossed myself, Heaven's name I spoke :
When thus the hermit's deep voice broke :

XX.

“ Does Storgo deem I have no claim,
“ As well as he, to heaven's blessed name?—
“ By heaven I swear that Satan's yoke,
“ And all who Satan's power invoke ;
“ All those who sell themselves to hell,
“ Through impious rite and magic spell,
“ In restless impotence of brain,
“ Unhallowed knowledge to obtain,
“ Are to me, as to thee unknown :
“ I work by human hands alone !
“ By human skill ! and all I ask,
“ Is Providence to bless my task.
“ As if an evil power could know
“ Aught more than man—save guilt and woe.
“ As if a knowledge thus obtained,
“ Could serve a sublunary end.
“ Not that all mysteries here disclosed,
“ Were by my skill or toil composed ;—
“ Led to these scenes by wayward chance,
“ They seem my fated 'heritance,

“ From superstition’s jealous eye
“ The science-searching sage must fly ;
“ But secret working shoots a ray,
“ That mars the darkness of her sway.
“ And since from day’s bright empire driven
“ Where night’s protecting shield is given,
“ These arts, in retributive power,
“ Shall haunt her votaries’ midnight hour.”

XXI.

All this the hermit said ; and more
I have forgot ; then thus he swore :
“ Storgo ! by that pale effigy
“ Of death, which roused thy wrath on me !
“ And by what served to still that wrath—
“ The dark !—the armory of death !
“ By these I swear and all beside,
“ From superstition forced to hide,
“ Here in this mountain breast, midway
“ ’Twixt the earth’s fire and the sun’s day !
“ I ’ve chosen thee, that thou may’st try
“ Thy art against conspiracy :
“ One of that firm and fearless band
“ Conducted by my secret hand.

“ I ask no pledge to bind thy soul :
“ Thy conscience be thy best control.
“ I trow such secret well may bind
“ A charm like conscience on thy mind.
“ Its very nature is a pledge,
“ That no one may transfer its badge ;
“ For should it even be held less dear
“ Than Samson’s secret, which a tear
“ Drew from him—what would that avail ?
“ And who would e’er believe the tale ?
“ Now ! to thy lord ; to him be told
“ What here thou’st heard or didst behold ;
“ Even to each very bridle-bit,
“ By which the war-horse foam is lit !—
“ Tell him no need to meet his friend :
“ My skill already doth extend,
“ Amply to know his friend as true,
“ And faithful as himself or you.
“ And now, haste back.” Thus having said,
To upper earth the way he led.

XXII.

There, proffering me, securely cased,
With leathern strap to gird the waist,

What he defined a lightning ball ;
He said : " If ever chance befall
" That thou art pushed at peril's worst,
" Dash this against thy foe, 'twill burst.
" Now to thy horse. Remount ! good speed !
" And come to me in fortune's need."
Lady, I 'm but a soldier rude,
And seldom in mistrustful mood ;
But surely would have been my mind
To trust this hermit less inclined,
Had I not more substantial found
His power than it seemed underground ;
For, faith 'twas easy to presume
My jaded hack had met good groom ;
And ere the day broke in the east,
Half my road was retraced at least.

XXIII.

As hastening fast my course I plied,
Methought I through the dawn descried
Stealing, like wolf from night-prey scared,
One that on oath I had declared
To be Catalca, had I not
Deemed him far off. But near the spot

He fled from, when I saw, half hid,
A warrior's dress, the gauntlets red
With blood, and found what haste had dropped,
The traitor's blood-stained blade ; then stopped
Were all my doubts, and with sad bode,
Onwards to camp I pressed my road.

XXIV.

The alarm was given ere I arrived ;
Yet my poor master still survived.
The token love still bade him keep,
Had served as breast-plate in his sleep.
I marked it where the gold was bent ;
But frail, frail was the aid it lent :
Perchance the blow was turned awry,
The nearest vital to pass by :
But well the assassin, when he fled,
Might deem it had not idly sped.
I need not tell how rumours sound,
Soon pealed the murderer's name around,
Nor how, for foul and treacherous end,
'Twas cast upon my master's friend.
These things as yet we darkly see ;
But lady there 's a time to be ;

The hardest conscience may be wrung ;
And murder hath a marvellous tongue.

XXV.

My master lay with death-like air,
While Guasto and the rest were there ;
Who, while his head the surgeon shook
But ill repressed the exulting look.
When all save me had left the bed,
A far more life-like glance he had,
As with faint voice he bade me tell
What of my journey had befel ;
And I, low stooping as in fear,
Whispered that strange tale to his ear.
Strong were the signs of interest,
His fixed eye and knit brow express'd ;
And the flush o'er his pale cheek past,
As o'er the pool the fitful blast.
A long, deep, solemn, pause did hold
His breath, when I the tale had told ;
Till, with a burst all wild and keen,
He spoke as if to one unseen :
(His last words I shall ne'er forget !)
“ Too late ! too late ! The treason set

“ Have got the start !—Come forth this night,
“ With all thy skill, with all thy might;
“ Or Guasto ere the morning’s sun,
“ Ends what Catalca hath begun.”
Exhausted he sunk back. A draught
I offered, which the surgeon left.
He dashed it from him, faltering, “ Bring
“ A draught unpoisoned from the spring.”

XXVI.

I loved my master ; while I’ve breath,
To his good cause bound is my faith !
Yet to fret, as if restless brain
Could fret away another’s pain ;
To fret and weaken thus the power
To help a friend in needful hour,
Was ne’er my way : I strive my best,
And leave to Providence the rest.
A trusty courier was dispatched
To Etna ; I remained and watched ;
I watched till past the midnight bell ;
Then, o’er my wearied senses fell
A leaden sleep : the fortieth hour
Had passed, since I had felt its power.

XXVII.

My master, and his friend, till now,
Were the army's theme, you 'll marvel how
So changed its voice.—By worm-like art
Corruption crept into its heart :
In some rich freight from far conveyed ;
Through all our camp, the infection spread.
No marvel 'tis, when bad and good,
By gold, or guile, are all subdued ;
If artful tongues, and crude beliefs,
Despoil the fame of noblest chiefs.

Here Storgo paused : Chinzica's head,
Low drooping, o'er the tears she shed,
Was gently raised, as if to know
Why stopped the old man's tale of woe ;
He paused ; his aspect seemed to ask
Brief respite from his unwont task :
To sad Lomilla she retired
Where haply aid might be required.

CANTO VII.

THE VOLCANO.

Escon di Mongibello e 'l puzzo, e 'l tuono.—Tasso.

This bodes some strange eruption to our state.—*Shakspeare.*

I.

CHINZICA, with attentive ear,
Again prepared the tale to hear :
The old man's memory, well she knew,
Like his attachment strong and true,
Would every circumstance relate,
Connected with his master's fate.

The Tale Resumed.

I waked and found at morning dawn,
The watch myself had set withdrawn.
'Twas then, dear lady—all was o'er !
Yet, what I saw the night before,

Now crossed my thought, as I surveyed
The corpse that now before me laid ;
And fancies rose into my brain,
And I resolved to ride again.
But when I viewed the body round,
Touched, raised it even, observed its wound,
My new resolves began to shake,
And all my new-sprung hopes to break.
My slackening purpose firm to draw,
On the death-bed this scroll I saw :

“ Friendship in murder’s chain is fixed.

“ Fidelity will follow next ;

“ Unless a living lord to find,

“ It dare to leave the dead behind.”

II.

Dastard and cold it seemed, I wis,
Irreverent too, in time like this
To flee the funeral rites. My troth
’Fore heaven I pledged in solemn oath ;
“ If my dear master’s true remains
“ Be here indeed ; by these blood-stains !
“ I ’ll labour, to my latest breath,
“ Vengeance on those who wrought his death.”

III.

But how to quit the camp, ere aught
Could raise the alarm of what I sought?—
It oft had been my wont to lead,
At early dawn, my master's steed
To exercise : I went—'twas gone !
With desperate haste I seized my own.
'Twas well I did : for soon I met
Good hint of how I was beset ;
And how Rhodoro's followers all,
Were like to rue his timeless fall ;
How rumour ran against my life,
As having stolen the murder-knife
With purpose foul, to cast the stain
Of guilt, on him from whom 'twas ta'en.
All this I learned from one, whose faith
Was last night proved, even to the death :
A friend imprisoned here like me ;
We've lost him, lady,—but he's free !
'Twas he, when I for rack was stript,
The knife you saw last night, who kept.
Tears would I shed, if that might lend
Strength to avenge a fallen friend.

IV.

But to my tale. One, with bold hand,
The barriers crossed, and cried out: "Stand!
"Stand, murderous dog! I charge"—at once,
Out flew my sword and lopped his lance.
No time for parley: like the wind,
I left the barriers behind.
Ere long, I heard the rapid tramp
Of steeds pursuing from the camp.
Along the margin of the main,
Between it and the mountain chain,
Which from wide Etna's base extends,
And at Charybdis whirlpool ends;
By vine and olive tree, full fast,
And streamless torrent-bed, I passed
To where a well-known wave-washed rock,
Half riven from its parent stock,
Forming a narrow pass, bold stands,
Like a huge giant, on the sands.
There, where the road up from the plain
Winds through the gap, I drew the rein.

V.

While my horse laboured up the ascent
Oft was my glance to rearward sent.
Albino's slave, whose treachery made
His master's armour murder's aid,
Was the first horseman I discerned :
To crush the wretch, I could have turned
In headlong fury ; but the rest
Came close behind. Onwards I pressed,
Ere I could win the gap, they gained
The slope ; thick flew their darts ; I strained,
Easing on foot my horse's load,
To urge him up the winding road.
Rehorsed, and bending through the gap,
With freshened speed, by ill-starred hap,
An arrow drove its mortal aim
Through my poor beast, and down he came.

VI.

In worst mischance I've no despair,
For providence I wot is there.
On pressed Albino's horse, bestrode
By his false slave. No better goad

Could urge my arm, he fell.—His place
I took, and carried on the race ;
Leaving, down broken on the course,
Albino's slave with Storgo's horse.

VII.

My poor old Roan ! Albeit the change
Had come so apt, I felt it strange.
But though I grieved my old friend dead,
Well wist I what I had instead.
Of all the friends distress may need,
Few, few are like the generous steed !
Albino's horse, that gallant bay,
Which oft the pride of circus gay,
In tournament encounter keen,
Had tilted many a Florentine ;
Albino's horse, that gallant bay,
Which foremost in the battle fray,
To victory oft his master bore,
Splashed to the saddle-girths in gore.
That horse which ne'er before had laid
One hoof to ground in flight ; now fled ;
Bearing as kindly my old frame,
As I had been his lord, and came

In triumph to my native land,
Not flying from a traitor band.

VIII.

Faith, lady, much my tale would swell,
Might I the war-horse virtues tell.
Yet trace him through but one day's chance :
A whirlwind in the first advance !
A fury in the battle's heat !
A guardian angel, in retreat !
Who bears the loser from the fray,
And saves him for a luckier day :
By whose good help, when fortune's down,
Full many a king hath saved his crown.

IX.

Soon cause had I good luck to ween,
What ta'en for ill-starred hap had been,
For my old Roan ne'er had, I trow,
The pith I stood in lack of now.
While down the pass I plied ; behind
Hallooed a voice ; I turned—i' the wind,
High waving from a rock, I spied
A kerchief to a war-lance tied ;

Upheld by one, to whose halloes
Loud answers soon before me rose.

X.

Athwart my path, like barren plain,
Down widening till it reached the main,
Forth issuing from the mountains, spread
A torrent's streamless stony bed.
Three horsemen armed, I there descried,
Who, as I neared, "Stop, murderer!" cried.
Now gallant bay! shall soon be said,
I've charged on thee, as well as fled;
For there is danger in the wind,
And foes before and foes behind!
Lady, my limbs were old and dry,
And not a lance to couch had I;
Yet well I knew the warrior's cry;
And my steed stout, and my shield tough,
To bear me through the encounter rough.
The gallant bay no sooner heard
His master's well-known charging word,
Than on, at charging speed, he rushed.
Though my old limbs were rudely brushed,

And my tough shield both bored and bent,
And my stout charger almost spent ;—
And though its pace now growing slack,
Forced me to look more anxious back ;
Yet I 'd seen two of three stout horse
Lie prostrate on the water-course.
The third, who seemed to be the chief,
Too late to join the onset brief,
Now to redeem the time pressed hard ;
And well I knew the voice that roared ;
“ Drop, Storgo, drop—drop for thy life !
Drop to the ground the blood-stained knife !”

XI.

A league thus followed, and thus led,
Far parted from the rest we sped.
At last Catalca gained so near,
And threw so dexterously his spear,
That deep transfixed my charger dropped,
And thus again my flight was stopped.
Thrice strove the noble beast, in vain
To rise ;—then stretched him on the plain.
On came the chief, like tempest wave,
(Far different from Albino's slave !)

Armed cap-a-pee from head to heel,
And holding high his threatening steel.
Lady, I uttered one brief strain
Of prayer to heaven. Into my brain,
Like heaven's own lightning, flashed the thought—
The hermit's lightning ball I caught ;
And, as in full career he pressed,
Dashed it against his horse's breast.

XII.

It burst like thunder ; and a cloud
Of flame and smoke formed like a shroud
Round impious rite ; through which did seem,
Like something in a fearful dream,
Rider and horse raised by the stroke ;
I saw them dimly through the smoke ;
But for an instant, for I ran,
Now unpursued by horse or man,
And as I scaled the mountain side,
The smoke had cleared, and I descried,
Both wildly strewed along the ground,
Or dead, or stunned, by deadly wound.
I paused not : but, by mountain track,
Rough, steep, and wild, (oft looking back,

Doubtful and cautious, lest pursuit
Should haply be renewed on foot,) 340
Unaided now by roan or bay,
I wandered, till, at close of day,
From outmost ridge of mountain chain,
My glad eyes ope'd on that wide plain,
From which, like vast isle, all alone,
Huge Mongibello, heaved its cone
Of snow, which far west, seemed to rise
Like silver 'mid the golden skies.

XIII.

The sun was newly set: and fair
And still seemed all the earth and air,—
Save some light clouds that slowly flew,
As if in upper sky it blew.
I sat upon the ridge to rest;
 (Faith I had had a weary day!)
And gazed upon the mountain vast,
 Which full outstretched before me lay:
Its sides which seemed so smooth to lie,
Far sloping on the western sky,
From tapering top to wide-spread base,
Appeared a kingdom to embrace;

Its motley dress: huge cap of snow
Broad forest belt; and all below,
Chequered with such a varied robe
As seemed a type of all the globe;
'Mid vine and olive-cultured spots,
Rose towns, and villages, and cots;
And verdant meads, and yellow corn,
'Mid tracks of lava black and torn.
While gazing, lo! I heard a sound,
Like thunder muffled in the ground,
A hollow, deep, half smothered tone,
As if the mountain gave a groan.
The locust's small, hoarse, chimy voice,
Ringing all round with ceaseless noise;
The black-bird's sweet song in the grove,
The lark's the open fields above;
At once are hushed; and still as death,
All nature seems to hold its breath;
While flocks and herds, in groups around,
Gaze towards whence comes the awful sound.

XIV.

Two moons, I wist, had passed, or more,
Since yon great mountain-top so hoar,

Had smoked as wont ; no good portent !
Perhaps it struggled now for vent.
This thought had not yet passed my mind,
When—lady, I was ne'er inclined
To boastful phrase : yet by Heaven's word !
Methinks what then I saw and heard,
Never, albeit my life should last
Through endless ages, could be cast
Out from my memory ; but remain,
And rise before my sense as plain
As if I saw and heard again !—

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XV.

Could I 've done aught but list and look,
I might have felt how the earth shook,
When, with tremendous yet dull sound,
As if, struck by strange force, the ground
Far off, sent back a dead rebound ;
From Etna's top, on which my eyes
Were fixed, all sudden seemed to rise,
Like what affrighted sailors spy
Sucking the sea into the sky,
Awful and black, a column vast,
Which o'er the vault of heaven did cas

Branches far spreading shadowy night :
It seemed a tree of cloud-like height,
Filling the air with hot foul breath.
If hell should plant a tree of death,
I trow, 'twould not more hideous grow :
Black, on a mountain top of snow !

XVI.

Ere that strange tree did disappear,
I ween its branches, far and near
Showered round the island's utmost coast
Even death's own fruit—ashes and dust.
For, lady, what I trowed might be
Semblance of death's terrific tree,
Was—sign of man's foul deeds, that fly
Even in the face of the Most High—
The earth, for man's sake, curst and riven,
Casting against the face of heaven,
Black dust and ashes : like sin's toil,
Which e'er doth on itself recoil.
The pelting hail, the feathering snow,
The torrent rain-drops, well I know,
The flight of arrows from the foe ;

But ne'er my weather-beaten brow
Felt shower so terrible as now ;
As if the world to atoms crushed
In black and foul confusion rushed.
On whirlwind blast it drove along,
Dashing the fields and woods among ;
As all the air with demon wings
Were filled, and earth with reptile things.

XVII.

Albeit, I 'd heard —in one dread hour,
Of cities buried by such shower,
I travelled onwards. Though the track
Was lost in dust and ashes black ;
Though night grew dark as underground,
When all the ghastly lights were drowned ;
And though the storm as on I drew,
Still heavier and heavier grew :
Stunned, blinded, choked, with noise and dust,
I travelled onwards—God my trust.
To bridegroom gay, and wedding guest
On festive errand, trimly dressed,
Such haps were great !—To me how small,
Whose fate outmagnified them all ;

My griefs were heavier than the storm ;
My prospects darker than the night ;
My losses such a sum did form—
The loss of track to me was light.

XVIII.

Across the ridge, the torrent bed,
The skirting plain, groping I sped—
My footsteps, up the long ascent,
Sinking and crackling as I went.
Albeit I knew the mountain well ;
Ne'er had I found the hermit's cell,
If, with a roar, as when hell's din
Hailed the first news of mortal sin,
The labouring mountain had not rent,
And forth its flames volcanic sent,
Casting their wild portentous glare
Athwart the blackness of the air ;
Had not the storm now 'gan to clear,
And the flames served my course to steer.
For mid the forest belt they seemed,
And near the hermit's cell I deemed :
But albeit far—for sight so rare,
I trowed the hermit would be there.

XIX.

I reached the wood, the forest belt,
I know not if 'twas dread I felt,
That now I might, at every step,
Be swallowed in a fiery gap.
I was a sinful soul I wist,
I prayed. I crossed myself and blessed.
Still I moved onwards spite of fear ;—
Lady—I sought my master here !
Louder through earth, burst ceaseless roar ;
Higher through sky the blaze did soar ;
Brighter through forest shadows came
The awful fierceness of the flame ;
As near, and nearer still I drew,
And saw, from depths of that old wood,
Where silence long had held its sway
And gloom defied the rays of day,
Where giant oaks, and chestnuts grew,
And lofty pines—the fiery flood
Outburst, with flames,—and rocks up driven
As if the earth threw stars to heaven.

XX.

Not all the thunder-claps, last night,
That roared incessant round the fight,
Could form one peal so dread, so vast,
As momentarily was there up cast.
Not all the towns, round all this land,
Uprooted by Almighty hand,
And piled upon our luckless town,
And oil instead of rain poured down,—
Not Rome's seven hills in far-famed pride,
With all their conquered wealth beside,—
Could raise a flame so fierce and wide,
As now, on Mongibello's side
Burst from seven mouths, that gaped like hell,
Before the lonely hermit's cell.
No river e'er I saw so broad
And rapid as that fire-stream flow'd ;
Its cooled sides forming its own banks ;
Bearing huge trees, whose flaming trunks,
And shrivelled branches, upright stood,
Like hell-trees growing from the flood :
Which crackled, heaved, and smoked along,
And boiled, and crashed the groves among.

XXI.

Each colour of fire did there prevail,
From deepest red to brightest pale :
Prone through the wood flowed deep red glare,
While fiercer hues blazed high in air.
The bright pale with intense heat gleaming,
Some stars, some almost like suns seeming.
In millions,—all sized, all shaped, rocks,
Outbursting with incessant shocks,
Passed and repassed, now up, now down,
Now the sky spangling, now the ground,
'Twas strange how earthy clump, and rock,
Upheaved on these red waves, did mock
The sight with wild fantastic shapes :
Isles, towns, imps, dragons, giants, apes,
Now raising sudden fiend-attacks,
Now pouring fiery cataracts !
'Twas strange to see that huge old wood
Close darkly round the burning flood ;
And as the blazing rock, showers flung
Amid the shattered branches rung,
To see the wild birds on the wing,
And hear their little voices sing,

As if they hailed another day
Yet scared at its portentous ray !

XXII.

I found the hermit on a cliff,
That o'er his cell hung, deep in gaze ;
As I approached, he seemed as if
A black shape sitting in the blaze.
I spoke not ; but his glance to claim,
Passed round between him and the flame,
He only marked me with a stare,
As if he recked not who was there.
Wearied, I sat him down beside,
And long I sat ; at length he cried ;
“ Storgo ! The awful work begun ;
“ Thy master down—Heaven's will be done !
“ It now remains——Faith ne'er despairs,
“ While pitying Heaven one portion spares.
“ Thy master down ; it now—to save
“ His friend from ignominious grave,
“ His native land, from midnight brand,
“ It now remains ;—an old man's hand !
“ Albeit much of my means are reft,
“ Kind Heaven hath still a portion left ;

“ See where yon seven fire-mouths devour
“ Seven branches of my secret power !
“ See where untouched—is one ! See ! crowned
“ With stars yon hill by fire girt round—
“ That marks, my science-vault may lie
“ Yet unconsumed ! see ! birds that fly
“ And sing amid the blaze, and roar—
“ These mark my hopes !”—He spoke no more ;
But in wild frenzy seemed to rise
And spread his hands towards the skies ;
Long thus remained as if he prayed ;
Then sat again ; but nothing said.
And though I tried, I tried in vain :
No word he spake that night again ;
But deep in gaze sat, sad and still,
Marking the flame and star-crowned hill.

XXIII.

Lady, thou 'lt ween this awful rout,
And my mind's dread, distress, and doubt ;
Might well have kept me wakeful there ;
But hard fatigue sleeps any where.
Nature's own medicine ! none so sure
For the mind's grief as labour's cure.

Ere from the cliff I rose, the day
Was up ; the hermit gone ; my way
I took unto his cell, and round
The neighbouring heights, but no soul found.
The roar continued, and the flame,
Unlessened : and albeit more tame
The fire now showed, amid day-light,
'Twas more like desolation's blight :
For now was seen that forest dell
All blasted as by breath of hell :
Huge trees, full-leaved at yestermorn,
Now black, bare, shrivelled, parched, and shorn ;
Some half o'erthrown, while some did seem
Still growing ; carried with the stream,
I trowed a fit sign did present
Of evil spirits in punishment,
While the surrounding unscathed wood,
Bloomed like the spirits of the good.

XXIV.

I drew close to the fire-stream brink,
And heaved a stone that well might sink ;
So ponderous 'twas, I scarce could throw—
It floated on the flood like straw.

As down its course I passed, more slow,
Dull, and less liquid, seemed its flow ;
Till o'er the vine and corn-fields spread
In solid mass, its blackening bed :
Like water-stream it did not wind
To suit the ground, but as behind
'Twas urged, along the mountain slope,
(For naught could turn its force nor stop)
It flowed ; and if it met ravine,
It turned not down, but rolling in,
Formed causeway for itself to pass,
And onwards moved its huge black mass.
Sad proof of this was shortly seen ;
For, trusting hollow ground between,
Would haply slant the stream away.
A village rued that fatal day.
To help in case of need, along
I sped and joined the peasant throng.

XXV.

Uprose a sudden cry, "lost ! gone !
" The hermit and the wounded man !"
I looked and saw the firestream coil
Round a small hill and form an isle,

On which a lone house, there upreared,
In awful jeopardy appeared.
Still the tame crowd all helpless stood,
And the wide-wasting lava viewed ;
As, when some monster's mouth expands,
In spell-bound fear its victim stands.
In vain their offerings round they flung,
And on the vines their relicts hung :
In vain their idoled saints they brought,
That miracles might there be wrought.
Swallowing whole vineyards far and wide,
On moved with slow, yet ruthless tide,
The stream's bold front ; which did appear
A long high bank, like furnace clear ;
Down which, in crackling ceaseless pour,
Rolled red hot rocks, and flamed before, }
Forerunners to the phalanxed war.
In vain their pastor, wild, and loud,
Preached of God's judgments to the crowd,
Who 'twixt each pause, invoked, implored,
Wept, howled, screamed ; and with penance cord,
Flogged and re-flogged their backs all bare ;
And beat their breasts, and tore their hair.

On moved the fire : their walls it reached,
Even while the doting pastor preached.

XXVI.

Lo ! sudden from the lone house came,
All clad in dazzling robes of white,
Waving a wand that shone like flame,
(The crowd stood breathless at the sight !)
The hermit ; whose feet, strangely shod,
Across the burning lava trod.
Near its fierce brink he stopped ; and cried ;
“ Know, ye blasphemers ! hands employed
“ In these self-scourgings, mock the hand
“ Of Heaven that punishes the land.
“ Know ye not how to expiate sin ?
“ Repent ! do good ; help helpless kin ;
“ Employ these hands, employ them quick,
“ To save the feeble and the sick.
“ Fly ! fly !”—He waved his wand—this speech
I trow did more than sermons teach.
At once, as at a saint’s command,
All ran—I joined with helping hand.
No soul was lost. But soon I saw,
Slow round each cot, the fire-stream draw,

Until their rising flames were choked,
And all one heap of blackness smoked.

XXVII.

Now, lady, mark! all desolate,
As the poor houseless peasants sate,
On the black ashes-covered ground,
(For all was black the country round)
In dumb grief looking at the tomb
Which rose around their buried home;
I asked who was the wounded man
'Bout whom, as "lost," such outcry ran?
They said, none knew; that yestermorn,
To yon lone house, by strangers borne,
He came; the strangers left him there,
Beneath the hermit's healing care.
His wound was desperate they avowed,
And hopes of life could scarce be trowed.
As thus the peasant throng replied;
The hermit beckoned me aside,
Where he held private talk with one
Who seemed a rough sea-faring man.
"Storgo (he said) thou hast, this day,
"Saved this man's parent: he'll repay

“ The debt ; this night he ’ll be thy host ;
“ To-morrow to Calabria’s coast
“ His bark shall bear thee : thence thou ’lt speed,
“ In pilgrim garb. To serve thy need,
“ From place to place, by these be passed
“ And be thy native place the last.
“ There haste thee with thy helping hand ;
“ Lest worse volcano burn that land,
“ Than thou seest here.” A packet small
He gave to speed my way withal.

XXVIII.

Then, with a low and solemn tone,
The hermit spoke to me alone :
“ Thou seekest thy master ; and dost know,
“ All the land black to Etna’s snow ;
“ And who shall say it is not all
“ In mourning for thy master’s fall ?
“ Thou seekest thy master ; and dost deem
“ Him now begirt with that fire-stream ;
“ And who shall say that aught alive,
“ Save me, may on that isle survive ?
“ But ere that mountain, and that plain,
“ Resume their smiling suits again ;

“ And ere that fiery flowing mass,
“ Permit one foot, save mine, to pass ;
“ By Heaven’s blessed aid, a *spirit* shall
“ Rise and revenge thy master’s fall.
“ Then to his sister be conveyed
“ This; that myself, like him betrayed,
“ Have sworn to labour, day and night,
“ Till the foul plot be brought to light.
“ And bid her mark the trial spot ;
“ For there, perhaps, will burst that plot.
“ But lest she doubt my power to guard,
“ Tell her all thou hast seen and heard.
“ And lest she doubt my means to trace ;
“ Tell her, *hers* is *my* native place.
“ And lest she doubt my will to aid ;
“ Tell her *by whom* I was betrayed :
“ *Lomilla’s mother was the fair,*
“ *Lomilla’s father the betrayer !*”
The hermit said no more, but sped
Across the lava’s burning bed.

XXIX.

The Tale concluded.

Before the astonished maiden could
Rouse from deep listening attitude :
Storgo had ceased his tale and gone.
She scarce had found herself alone
Ere messengers, in solemn call,
Her name resounding through the hall,
Summoned the maiden forth to stand
Preserver of her native land.

CANTO VIII.

THE PROCESSION.

Di grandi esequie, e di funebri pompe.—Ariosto.

Down her weedy trophies, and herself,

Fell—

Shakspeare.

I.

IN every Pisan church, this day,
Hymn hath been sung, and prayer been said :
Thankgivings for the well-won fray,
And requiem for the patriot dead.
How changed, how changed is Pisa's scene,
From that of morn—of night—of e'en !
Like her own heroine, all, now there,
Seems cold, calm, solemn, sad, and fair.
Crowds on crowds stand in garb of woe,
On either side of the vast bow
That parts the town from east to west ;
Where eye, on Arno's mirrored breast,

May mark death-pall, and sable plume,
Leaning along heaven's azure dome ;
As if a sign to all were given,
To rest their sorrows upon heaven.
For not a house, on those proud quays,
But all one front of grief displays :
Even from the very terraced tops,
The sable vest of sadness drops ;
O'er which, at intervals on high,
Plumes wave their black against the sky,
At distance 'pearing things of life,
As mourning o'er the recent strife.

II.

From every church the country round,
Its patron saint with garland crowned,
Is here up borne, in robes of woe,
To grace the grand funereal show.
In foremost rank of Pisa's throng,
Are ranged the river-brink along,
With torches dim in day-light air,
Loose flowing locks, and feet all bare,
Laurel-crowned, white-robed maids, who seem
To gaze, in penance, on the stream ;

Fixed in mute woe, as from that flood
They would recall their country's blood.

III.

Now, on that bridge, where yesternight,
All fierce and furious raged the fight ;
In formal state are borne death's biers ;
And scarce less motionless appears
Life, which, nor sound, nor move, doth note,
Save grief's sobs struggling in its throat.
And, oh ! how cold those dead forms lay,
Which seemed all fire in last night's fray.
Lo, where, amid that corpse-press'd bridge,
Conspicuous, as on mountain ridge,
Some stately tree stands all alone,
Amidst a forest overthrown,
In pure white silken robes arrayed,
On high sits Pisa's heroine maid ;
Gazed on by all ; herself I ween,
Unconscious of the passing scene.

IV.

As snow peak peers o'er low dark cloud,
So this fair pageant from the crowd ;

Where sits enthroned the maid—the while
Her thoughts are in the fire-girt isle.
So pale her look, so fixed her air
As if her corpse alone was there.
In emblemed state she seems to rest,
'Neath a fair tree which bears a nest,
O'er which a standard broad, unrolled,
Displays these words enwrought with gold :
“ DEAF TO HER CRY SHALL PISA BE,
“ WHOSE NEST IS BUILT ON FREEDOM'S TREE ?”

V.

Ere the procession moves along,
A thousand voices joined in song,
At once around the bridge arise,
In chorus echoing to the skies.

Song after Victory.

Let the song of triumph flow,
Tempered by the notes of woe ;
And Devotion's voice express,
Triumph in its thankfulness.

To the Power who makes us free,
Not alone our voices raise,
But our actions ever be
Songs of thankfulness and praise.

May our country ever know
Ne'er to coward fears to yield ;
Be its fortunes e'er so low,
Ne'er to quit the desperate field.

Honoured be the patriot maid ;
May her name for ever live ;
May the Power who gives her aid
Every other blessing give.

Honoured be our countrymen,
Who have fought, and who have bled ;
May they triumph o'er again
When their country calls their aid

Let the song of triumph flow,
Tempered by the notes of woe ;
And Devotion's voice express
Triumph in its thankfulness.

Be the blood for country shed,
Be it consecrated ever ;
Honoured be the patriot dead ;
May their memories perish never.

Fame on earth, and joy in Heaven,
To the fallen patriot band ;
O ! be all their sins forgiven,
Dying for their native land.

Pisa's north and southern side,
On this bridge, in after day ;
Oft shall have their prowess tried,
In the well-feigned battle fray.

Each third year be this great game,
To commemorate the bridge ;
Thus, for ever be its fame,
Handed down from age to age.

Let the song of triumph flow,
Mingling thanks with notes of woe,
All let Fame's loud music blend,
All from age to age extend.

VI.

Hushed is the song, and the hoarse roar
Of loud acclaim from Arno's shore ;
Hath died away ; and sad and slow,
The funeral train in pomp of woe,
Forth moves ; and as it moves along,
So sways each impulse of the throng,
As if to weep alone each eye
Each breast alone to heave the sigh.
All is hushed save one low lament,
In fitful strains of heavenly chant ;
As if a seraph, there unseen,
Breathed moanings through the calm serene.

VII.

Foremost moves in procession there
(The twofold load seems hard to bear,)
A cross which midst a heap doth stand
Of earth :—both brought from Holy Land.
That earth a virtue hath, men say,
The dead to hinder from decay ;
And all the afflicted who believe,
Touching that cross their cure receive.

Next move by two's, with barefoot tread,
Thorn-crowned, and all in sackcloth clad,
Penitents ; then, in long array,
Pilgrims ; then " friars, black, white, grey :"
In orders, bearing each its sign
Hung high with relicts deemed divine ;
Next imaged saints are slowly led ;
Then funeral biers whereon the dead,
With hands and face exposed to day,
In pale unconscious stillness lay,
Each with clasped hands upon the breast,
Upturned as if to Heaven addressed :
A bloody sword by each right side :
A laurel wreath round each head tied ;
Next the chief mourners move along ;
Next bishop girt by priestly throng :
Then virgin train in white arrayed ;
And last, high-borne, the patriot maid.
That virgin train 'pears to the eye,
As through the dark crowd winds its way,
Like break of light along the sky
In a dull, gloomy, winter day.

VIII.

Now halts the long procession train
Before the solemn Gothic fane,
Where last night, spread the patriot flame
Through frightened throngs who round it came.
'Tis here the assembled choir proclaim
In peals of song the heroine's name.

The Song to the Heroine.

'Twas here she stood
By horrors undismayed ;
Her country's fainting soul renewed,
And all hearts in one glorious ardour swayed.
Victory ! Victory !
Chinzica ! Chinzica !
She hath saved her country, the lovely Patriot Maid.

'Twas here she stood,
By horrors undismayed ;
With more than mortal power endued,
And from inglorious flight her country's footsteps staid,
Victory ! Victory !
Chinzica ! Chinzica !
She hath saved her country, the lovely Patriot Maid.

'Twas here she stood,
By horrors undismayed ;
'Twas here she roused the warlike mood,
And to the battle forth her flying country bade.
Victory ! Victory !
Chinzica ! Chinzica !
She hath saved her country, the lovely Patriot Maid.

IX.

The song hath ceased. The Church's hand
On this blessed spot hath blessed the land ;
Hath blessed and crowned the Patriot Maid.
The long procession re-arrayed,
With slow-drawn step moves forth again,
Across the blood-stained bridge ; and then,
Westward along the southern quay,
Winds to the heroine's tower its way ;
And thither moves the choral throng
To raise the final triumph song.
Upon that tower, while all beside
Is filled with crowds, nought is descried
Save victory's flag, which, hung on high,
All drooping on its staff doth lie :

No breath of air its folds to wave,
It seems as weeping for the brave.

X.

This tower, by time long since o'erthrown,
To modern days its site unknown,
Stood somewhat west where now doth rise
A Gothic church—of such small size,
It seems the work of pigmy hands,
And close on Arno's margin stands.
'Twas from this spot I trow not far,
Had reached the virgin train and car,
When lo ! uprising by the flag,
With flowers—straw—paper-shreds—and rag—
All decked in variegated show—
Is that a thing of joy, or woe,
Or triumph—and doth it belong
To that to join the final song ?

XI.

On the tower's battlement it stands,
With graceful bend and outstretched hands,
Seeming there pictured on the sky,
As if some fabled deity—

(Such its wild majesty of air
So rich its falls of 'shevelled hair,
So lovely all—its face—shape—mien)—
Had come to mock the pompous scene.
How shine its eyes, how glow its cheeks,
With what wild energy it speaks,
While, in one wide—dumb—stupid gaze,
Fixed stand the throngs round Pisa's quays.

Come, O come, my fair confessor,
Come and give atonement birth,
Come, O come, and let me bless her,
Best and firmest friend on earth.

Lost Albino, now imprisoned,
Once as free as ocean's air,
Little recks his heedless country,
It was I who sent him there.

Look Rhodoro, once sepulchred,
Now a wanderer on the earth,
Little recks his heedless country,
It was I that called him forth.

Lost Catalca, once a bridegroom,
Now the king and lord of hell,
Little recks his heedless country,
It was I by whom he fell.

I, the queen of Pandemonium,
Here on my infernal throne,
These black subjects all around me,
This vast empire all my own.

Fairer once was my dominion,
Ere I sank from realms of day,
When I soared on beauty's pinion,
When each heart confessed my sway.

Still in midst of all my troubles,
Still I've kept my birth-right dower,
All the joys of life are bubbles,
All except one little flower.

When the wind, rain, lightning, thunder,
Fire, and darkness, mixed their power;
When my breast was torn asunder,
Still I saw the little flower.

When I sank through black commotion,
Caverns yawning to devour ;
When I skimmed along the ocean,
Still I saw the little flower.

When with goblin elves, and witches
Sliding down the moonlight shower,
When I heard the wild swan's music,
Thus I snatched the little flower.

XII.

Lomilla paused ; and with a snatch,
Seemed at the vacant sky to catch ;
Then thrust her hand into her breast,
And tore aside her blood-stained vest ;
Then looked askance and faintly smiled ;
Then burst at once to laughter wild,
Laughter which from that giddy height,
Pealed on the ear with more dread might
Than wildest shriek, or yell of woe
That rose from last night's scenes below.
'Twas now her restless rolling eyes,
Seemed with a turn of quick surprise,
To dart on one who sought to advance,
And save her from the dangerous chance.

Down (she cried), nor tempt me longer ;
Hell that sacred sound ne'er heard ;
As my courage waxeth stronger,
Hell shall hear the blessed word.

Its least breath shall this vast empire
Into shapeless fragments split,
Make it, like a poor soul, tremble
Down, down, to its lowest pit.

By its power of declaration,
I shall abdicate the throne ;
I'll resign the subject nation
To a monarch of its own.

By its power be hell's allurements,
Tattered like a parchment scroll—
Now I free myself for ever !—
God of Heaven, receive my soul !

XIII.

With these words, from the battlement
Lomilla's fair form headlong went ;
I saw it fluttering in the air ;
I saw it for a moment there,

As, downward rapidly inclined,
Its dress fantastic streamed behind.
The cautious Pisans who suspect
In watchful dread some desperate act,
Held outspread funeral palls around,
To catch it ere it reached the ground.
Yet the black pall was stained with red,—
And Pisa's loveliest form lay dead.

XIV.

O'er the deep voice of sympathy,
Which burst at once from that vast crowd,
All might distinguish one sad cry,
More wildly shrill, more piercing loud.
Was it from kindred blood, that cry?
Sire's, brother's, sister's grief of soul?
Was it a mother's agony—
The deepest agony of all?—
No! no! all poor Lomilla's kin,
Save one, are now the tomb within;
Save one, far off, whose grief, I wis
Would never utter cry like this.
But though no kindred blood its claim,
O! claimed it not as dear a name?

'Twas friendship's cry!—And in stiff state
Viewing its object's awful fate,
With moveless aspect, chastened eye,
Shall Friendship in mere utterance die?
Sit there amid the pompous shew,
In passive pageantry of woe?

XV.

Shall woman, who as mother—wife,—
Glows in the kindred ties of life,
Shall woman's energy of love,
Alone in friendship feebly move?
Must beauty's rivalry destroy
What sprung from childhood's mutual joy?
Or is 't alone for man's tough mind
The cords of friendship firm to bind?
Hath Chinzica, seeing her friend betrayed,
And faithless to her brother made,
And bound in some mysterious tie
By fell Catalca's villany——,
Hath Chinzica, in this dread hour,
Surmounted friendship's long-proved power?
Or hath old Storgo's tale renewed
The memory of long-buried feud?

“ Lomilla’s mother was the fair,

“ Lomilla’s father the betrayer.”

Or did she coldly calculate,

If, quitting now her car of state,

She might derange the funeral train ?

Or if all aid might now be vain ?

Did nature stop to reason now ?—

—I saw the flush upon her brow :

And ere her friend had reached the ground,

Ere closed the appalled spectators round ;

She sprung, she rushed, she flew—her fall

Was prostrate on the bloody pall ;

And scarce the corpse felt death’s cold trace,

Ere locked in friendship’s warm embrace.

XVI.

Deprived of sense, the maid is torn

From her dead friend, and gently borne

Up to her tower ; while, where it fell,

The corpse remains its fate to tell ;

Rolled in the bloody pall to lie,—

(Its winding sheet) beneath the sky,

Exposed. And shall all rites employed

To bury this poor self-destroyed,

Be but the mattock and the spade—
Far from the consecrated dead ?
Forbid it that blessed Power above,
Who buries guilt in mercy's love !

XVII.

'Tis night. And now resembling night,
Each Pisan church is starred with light
All round its vaulted roofs, and hung
With black ; wherein are requiems sung
For the souls of the patriot dead,
Whose slaughtered forms are there outspread.
'Tis calm clear night. The kneeling throngs,
Are weeping o'er devotion's songs ;
While traitors this apt season borrow
To plan anew their country's sorrow ;
To pave for power some easier way,
And give their vengeance liberal sway ;
Catching—even from the maniac speech—
New turns that may their foes o'erreach :
Such fell devices now unfold,
As make e'en treachery's blood run cold.

XVIII.

'Tis calm, clear night ; the streets no more
Are thronged ; the grand procession's o'er.
But hie thee forth the city wall :—
I trow it will thy sight appal !—
Down that part of Saint Julian's side
That lies towards the Arno's tide,
All clad in robes of ghastly glare,
With shining cross borne high in air,
Chanting sweet songs in plaintive strain,
Slow winds a long procession train.
While on the mountain slope, it seems
As from a glow-worm snake its beams ;
But o'er the plain all straight it glides,
As mid the trees it peers and hides ;
Till gathered into one broad light,
On Arno floats the ghost-like freight.

XIX.

Along the stream, where mirrored lies
The image of the starry skies,
While noiseless fire-flies flit around,
Far twinkling through the dark profound ;

The lightest rippings of the wave
That now the drooping willows lave ;
The gentlest flow of waters near,
I trow you may distinctly hear ;
So silent floats the unearthly throng
During each pause of their sweet song.

XX.

When within Pisa's walls doth pass
That floating light's mysterious mass ;
No watchman's voice, from flanking tower,
Dares break the stillness of the hour
By warlike challenge. But—again !
Hark to the song's renewing strain.

Song.

Peace to the city ! The battle is won.
Peace to the city ! The murderer be tried.
Peace to the city ! Let justice be done.
Peace to the city ! Be mercy denied.
If justice be thwarted where mercy is shown,
The soil of the state shall with traitors be sown.
If mercy be granted where justice is due,
Salvation to him, is destruction to you.

Peace to the city ! The battle is won.

Peace to the city ! The murderer be tried.

Peace to the city ! Let justice be done.

Peace to the city ! Be mercy denied.

If justice be thwarted where mercy is given ;

'Tis not imitation, but mockery, of Heaven.

Be righteous in judgment, be true to the laws,

For Heaven will be present to witness the cause.

XXI.

As through the bridge mid-arch slow floats

The ghostlike throng, the song's sweet notes

Are hushed and not a sound they breathe,

Till reaching yonder tower beneath,

The outcast corpse, there laid, they bring

Into their bark ; and as they sing,

Athwart the stream their course they guide,

And land on Pisa's northern side.

There, moving to the requiem's sound,

They bear the corpse to holy ground ;

Within whose walls they disappear,

And Pisans gaze in speechless fear.

The Requiem.

Peace to the soul who hath parted
From the body's most beautiful form ;
Who from life in the frenzy of passion hath started
Like the flower from the stalk dashed down by
the storm.

'Tis not for weak judgments of men,
To Heaven's secret councils to climb ;
Alone the great book of eternity can,
Explain all that 's dark in the volumes of Time.

Peace to the soul who hath sped
Uncalled from its mortal abode,
While conscience was darkened, and reason's light
dead,
Who broke through death's gate to eternity's
road.

From children to children of earth,
O ever be charity given :
The weakest, the wildest, the guiltiest have worth
Which alone, which alone can be valued in
Heaven.

Peace to the soul that is riven

From earth by delusion's wild strife :

And, O ! may the sins of its wrath be given,

And mercy restore it to newness of life.

And here may its tenement of clay,

In holy ground undisturbed wait ;

Where weeds blend with flowers, until Time's final
day,

Shall raise it, renewed, to immortal estate.

XXII.

The bark which bore the funeral train,

Down Arno floating slow again,

Now emptied of its freight did seem

Like a palled coffin on the stream.

As 'twere a living thing, unoared

It moved, and no soul seemed on board—

Mysterious thus was traced its way,

While none its progress dared to stay,

But fled in fear. Before daylight

'Twas vanished from all human sight.

If melted into viewless air,

Or if it sank—none may declare—

CANTO IX.

THE TRIAL.

Traea a morte il cavalier dolente.—Ariosto.

He's sentenc'd; no more hearing.—*Shakspeare.*

I.

TWICE hath the sun climbed up the sky,
And once gone down, since Arno's flood
Was crimsoned o'er with slaughter's dye;
And still unvenged is Pisa's blood;
Her fallen sons unburied lie;
Their manes still for justice cry,
On him who caused their country's woe,
On him who struck the assassin blow.
Near the north rampart where appear,
Wide sloping upward, tier round tier;
All garbed in deepest suits of woe,
Sit Pisa's congregated shew.

Beneath a canopy spread round
The whole vast forum's oval bound ;
All sable like the vault of night
When clouds obscure each heavenly light :
There shaded from the noontide blaze,
They sit in mute attentive gaze.

II.

In pallid throngs, as wave-tops shew
Along a dark and stormy deep,
'Pear woe-blanch'd faces, row 'bove row,
Round the long mourning-covered steep ;
And fixed—as if a polar chillness
Had given the waves a death-like stillness :
Fixed on the Arena space, where met
Are now the court—the judges sit.
Their robes, in gorgeous contrast there,
Cast on the black a crimson glare,
Claiming by very look to draw
More homage to the offended law ;
While mid the Arena, stands a thing
Doth added power of terror bring :
The fatal block still bearing stain
Of the last criminal there slain ;

The upraised axe tremendous gleaming,
As just for execution seeming.

III.

Of this block all the eastern side,
Within the Arena, is void space ;
But all the west is occupied :

It is the court of trial's place ;
Where, on the judges' either hand,
The accused and accusers stand
Opposed ; where, after solemn pause,
The chief judge opens thus the cause :
“ Albino, thou standest here arraigned
“ Of murder ; nor alone is stained
“ Thy name, thy character, thy place,
“ With murder's taint, its foul disgrace ;
“ But to this charge's heaviest weight
“ Is added treachery to the state ;
“ By which, only two nights ago,
“ All the flood-gates of Pisa's woe
“ Were set so wide, not months, not years
“ Can heal her loss of blood and tears.
“ If thou art innocent, 'tis behoved
“ Thy innocence be not disproved :

“ If thou art guilty, to deny
“ Would swell thy guilt with perjury,
“ Whereas a free confession might
“ Save thy soul from perdition’s plight,
“ Yield to the charge then, or repell
“ As thou hop’st Heaven or fearest hell.”

IV.

For a brief space such silence reigns,
That not a sound invades the ear,
Save a slight tremulous clank of chains;
Till, with a voice, deep, firm, and clear,
The prisoner speaks: “ Before high Heaven,
“ As my soul hopes to be forgiven
“ Its sins, I swear that soul is free,
“ From murder and from treachery,
“ Unless ’tis murder called, when flows,
“ In battle, blood from country’s foes:
“ If that be murder, I confess
“ My soul most deep in guiltiness;
“ If not, to the first charge I plead—
“ *Not guilty*—in thought, word, or deed;
“ To the last charge I likewise cry—
“ *Not guilty.*”—Here Albino’s eye

Darts lightning, and his dark brow lowers,
And his tall form more stately towers ;
Yet o'er his pale cheek swiftly pass,
Like flitting shadows o'er a glass,
Faint glows that make the gazer's deem
Him less pure than he fain would seem.

V.

The cause proceeds, and proof is brought,
How the two friends in camp one night,
Exchanged hot words, by passion wrought,
And seemed to threaten mortal fight :
How from Lomilla sprang the feud ;
How parted both in angry mood ;
How, ere dawn, from Albino's tent
An armed man to Rhodoro's went,
Stabbed him and fled : and how was traced
The blood-stained armour ; where 'twas placed,
And where Albino skulked aloof ;
To all which, such concurring proof
Is brought, must force men to infer
Albino his friend's murderer ;
Unless some counter-proof more plain,
Can break the circumstantial chain.

Next comes, in sequel to these facts,
How ambush'd treachery's attacks,
Surprised the midnight battle's rear,
Attended by these words of fear ;
“ *Strike for Albino! Pisa down!*
“ *Albino, strike, and win the town!*”
Which, echoed from the invading band,
Evinced the traitor of the land.
Besides, how 'mongst the treacherous slain,
Were found some prisoners who were ta'en,
And from Sicilia brought in thrall,
As plotters of Rhodoro's fall ;
How these, when first alarm prevailed,
Had been by some strange power ungaoled,
The gaoler, near the prison-door,
Next morn, found weltering in his gore ;
How he who coped the stranger knight
From Arno dragged in half-drowned plight,
And by the ghost-like warrior thrown
To shore, was for Albino known.
Who had for lawless end been freed,
When thus was marred the traitorous deed.
By store of witnesses are urged
These facts ; their bearings all enlarged ;

Link upon link most artful tied,
The whole chain dexterously applied :
Thus closed the accuser's evidence,
Forth stands the prisoner in defence.

VI.

“ My honoured judges, I deny
The crimes I now am charged withal ;
And, if thereon condemned to die,
By other's guilt must meet my fall.
'Tis not this transient boon of breath
I fear to lose : it is not death :
But, quitting thus my native place,
To leave to those I love, disgrace.
That I have sinned I do allow ;
But not as I am charged with now.
My tale is brief. A quarrel rose :
My accusers have assigned the cause.
A mistress had been false it seemed ;
But not with me as my friend deemed.
To find him harbour such mistake,
Edged with resentment sorrow's ache ;
And true, I parted hurt, confused,
As friendship must part thus accused.

As in my tent I laid to rest,
Comes a scroll from him thus expressed ;
Not by his follower brought, but mine,
Who also brought a verbal sign,
That shewed him authorized with power
To name the meeting, place and hour.
Thus ran the scroll : ‘ *Meet me in arms.*

‘ *But lest it may excite alarms*

‘ *In camp, to pass in arms the gate ;*

‘ *Quit camp in private unarmed state.*

‘ *Thy follower bears this—not my own*

‘ *Who for our umpire forth is gone.’*

I bade my follower straightway bear
My warrior gear concealed, to where
We were to meet ; there went alone,
So guised that I might pass unknown.
My tale need not be farther pressed ;
My accusers having told the rest.

I know the power of inference
From each concurring circumstance,
Proportioned as the accused case
Lacks means of proof from time and place.
But, bear in mind, e’er since that night,
My follower has not met my sight.

Why does he not confront me here?
Why not his evidence appear?
The strange embarrassment I felt,
When taken, was no test of guilt
As 'tis presumed. Presumptuous man
Deems by mere outward show, to scan
What lies far hid within: Heaven's eye
Alone to human breasts can pry.
How many a wretch in shame doth drown,
Whom mere appearances press down!
Guilt, long since dead to every sense
Of shame, stands forth as innocence;
While innocence, alive to shame,
Sinks down oppressed, by guilt's mere name.
Thus when the orb of day doth rise,
Flooding with light, earth, sea, and skies;
While darkest grounds escape the glow,
Yielding tho' spotless lies the snow."

VII.

Albino pausing, in reply

Forth speaks the state accuser: "Lo,
The witness thou demandest doth lie
Powerless of uttering *ay* or *no*.

No proof shall e'er by him be given,
Save at the justice court of Heaven.
Go ask, (if thou would'st learn his end,)
The follower of thy murdered friend ;
The *traitor Storgo* : *he* doth know
How, when, and where the mortal blow
Was struck, that hath removed from hence
Thy very deadliest evidence,
Who hath, with dying breath, declared
Thy plans by him no farther shared
Than thy mere mandate : he retired,
Then coming at the time desired
Back to thy tent, found, ere 'twas dawn,
Thee and thy armour both withdrawn.
This farther from his tale was gained,
How his alone in stall remained,
While thy horse afterwards was found,
Unridered, scampering o'er the ground,
Near where thine armour lay concealed.
Thus had the attempt to hide revealed
The crime, for, in the attempt, had fled
Thy horse and to discovery led."

VIII.

“ To what discovery led ? ” replies
Albino with indignant wrath—
To what discovery led, that lies
Without the verge of falsehood’s path ?
Even were all true for truth here shown,
Inference at least is falsely drawn.
Much false I know ; though much, how true
Or false so-e’er, be past my view.
All is false that my name connects
With murderous or with treacherous acts.
’Tis false my arms by me were borne
Or stained with blood, that fatal morn.
’Tis false that e’er was raised my hand
Against my friend or native land.
But more ! ’Tis false, and false as hell,
That ghostly power did e’er me quell :
That e’er half-drowned, from Arno thrown,
Was warrior for Albino known.
My sole assertion well I know,
Can have but weak avail in law,
While here on dark suspicion’s ground,
Truth joined with falsehood snares me round.

Like a poor ship by tempest tost,
Benighted on a leeward coast,
True lights, upheld by falsehood's hands,
Have drawn me to destruction's sands.
Blunt falsehood is a harmless thing,
To falsehood that with truth doth spring;
As of foul draughts most foul of all,
Is that where honey blends with gall.
Best things are made worst by misuse;
As scripture bent to Satan's views.
How deadly is that way beset,
Where with truth, falsehood weaves her net!
How poisoned is that arrow sent,
Where truth's bow is by falsehood bent!
And oh! how treacherous is that guide,
Where on truth's chain false links are tied!
Then, since my follower is not here,
To show my judges all, how mere
Coincidence alone conspires
With perjured breath, which treachery hires,
All my fair fame to overthrow,
And end my life by shameful blow—
My fate must pend on one sole chance,
And that is all my poor defence.”

IX.

Though all mankind are oft untrue,
To virtuous nature's sacred cause,
How few unfilled with horror view
The atrocious breaker of her laws !
Hence oft when foul suspicion's brand
Marks even the noblest of the land,
Sympathy's self her shrinking ray
Turns from the monstrous spot away :
And oh ! when love averts her eye,
Is 't wonder common friendships fly ?
Had not her brother's well-known hand
Told her how guiltless was his friend ;
Even Chinzica had now confessed,
What all around too plain expressed :
Belief nought honest could prevent
The law's award of punishment—
As, entering there, the trembling maid,
No more in pageant vest arrayed,
But weeds of deepest mourning ; stood,
And all the dread tribunal viewed.

X.

No Pisan there unmoved can brook
To see the scarce supported frame,
The oppressed the agitated look
Of her whom late, with loud acclaim,
They hailed on triumph's splendid car,
As heroine of the midnight war—
Now standing at her country's bar;
As if, by some amazing fall,
Herself had become criminal;
Sinking from glory's high estate,
At once into disgrace and hate.
Her! the sole witness to defend
The accused of her sole brother's end.
Vain is the muse's art to shew
The unutterable glance of woe—
One glance alone—that passed between
The victims of this trial scene:
As if it were an age of grief
Concentred in one moment brief.

XI.

On holy cross the oath is ta'en :

The story of the casket told,

The letter shewn, but shewn in vain :

The proof deemed all too vague to hold

Its place except within that breast

By passion's power so full possessed,

As bribes the judgment to receive

For truth what love would fain believe,

' *Ask you who struck the assassin blow?*

' *'Twas not my friend; it was my foe!*

Ambiguous, undefined, unclear,

And even unsigned, these words appear.

Shall such a letter stronger draw

Than the strong letter of the law?

What though Rhodoro's own hand writ

This strange-brought proof; what comes by it,

Save what all must without it know?

Why—that his *murderer* was his *foe!*

What light to truth can such proof lend?

A foe his murderer—not a friend!

Vain these objections to confront,

By urging how Rhodoro's wont,

Was e'er, (in speech pronounced or penned,) *Albino* still to call his *friend*;
While counter-urged, denied by none,
Rhodoro had more friends than one.

XII.

As one who finds some relict rare,
For ages under ground concealed;
Opes it to long excluded air,
And sees the treasured form revealed,
When lo! a touch—the air's first gust
Crumbles it to a heap of dust;
So Chinzica, with pale dismay,
Sees dear prized proof all swept away
By the law's breath. Like one distract,
She stands in doubt to speak or act;
Catalca's treachery to reveal,
Or, in one generous last appeal,
To shew who came, with well-timed brand,
Slew the Sard King and saved the land.
Too well, her unsupported word,
She knows, would seem more than absurd,
To Pisa's senate, where preside
Those to Catalca near allied,

Against whose influence to prevail
Were miracle—so strange a tale !
More so, while rumour, up and down
Already hath possessed the town ;
Catalca was the stranger knight
Whose well-timed aid redeemed the fight.

XIII.

While yet she stands in mute suspense,
Each opposed senator's appeal
Is made ; summed up the evidence ;
And—the cause hath its final seal.
Hark ! the judge speaks ! his deep drawn breath
Gives forth the awful words of death :
Behold amid the arena stands
The fatal block, whereon commands
The law, if proved be guilty deed,
That straight the malefactor bleed ;
And all it grants, twixt doom and dole,
Is time to shrive the sinner's soul.
Hence all the assembled crowds who cast
Here anxious looks, not sentence passed
Alone expect to hear, but eke
Convicted guilt his last words speak ;

To see the blood, in shame now shed,
Of him who oft in glory bled ;
To see him slain who slew his friend,
A hero meet a murderer's end.
For his guilt shews past doubt to all,
And pity must not stop his fall.
His country's wrongs, his country's woes
Rise up to stifle pity's throes.
But as our christian law delights
In charity, it grants church rites,
To which such guilt hath no just claims ;
And though his body it condemns ;
Yet, that a soul may not be lost
It grants confession and the host.

XIV.

Oh ! Chinzica what now thy thought ?
Where Storgo's promised evidence ?
In vain thine anxious eyes have sought ;
Now on thy lover lights their glance :
The prisoner's hath not that fixed cast,
As if he knew it was his last.
There is a wavering of the mind
About his look : he's not resigned

With hopes hath he too been deceived ?
Or have these couplets been believed,
Which, at the dawn of this sad day,
He found within his dungeon lay ?
' Fear not to perish by the block :
' Fear not to fall contumely's mock ;
' But brace thy courage to its bent ;
' For dread and doubtful is the event.'

XV.

Now signs and whispers pass between
The prisoner and the priestly man—
Whose long white beard and cowl doth screen
What the maid vainly seeks to scan.
'Tis not Ormasso ; whom she weens
Sick, slain, or held by secret means ;
But some confessor in his place,
Sent to assist the work of grace ;
And lo ! she sees in white arrayed,
Seeming to bear *the host*, displayed,
A throng which fills, albeit so wide,
The whole arena's eastern side ;
And hears the death preparing song
Sung by that throng—the unearthly throng

Who, last night, so mysterious bore
Lomilla's corpse from Arno's shore.

XVI.

Confession's work seems done ; and all
Might deem the prisoner now prepared ;
But not for ignominious fall :
In his eye there 's nobler hope declared.
No more the aspect of his brow
Doth indicate a wavering now.
He wears that calm exalted look,
Easy by vulgar eyes mistook
For soul resigned : but those who best
Know him, see nothing such expressed ;
But rather strong exerted will
To keep each restless impulse still.
What 'tis they know not ; but seems plain
Some desperate resolution ta'en,
Sudden as strange, auguring at least,
No common influence of that priest.

XVII.

When the host's song had died away,
Even if a sigh the air had stirred,

While priest and prisoner kneeled to pray,
I trow that sigh you might have heard.
Silence whose depth was marked by none—
All were so rapt—until 'twas done ;
Until, when he had ceased to kneel,
The prisoner raised his last appeal :
Not like one whom death's terrors shake ;
Not one with self's sole cares at stake ;
But one who lifts life's parting call,
To warn his country from its fall.
With truth's bold hand he marks the snare ;
And names his country's betrayer :
Him prisoned and escaped again,
By whose infernal plots were slain
The gaoler, and each hapless wight
Who chanced to witness his vile plight,
When on the city's north quay tossed
The wretch was by the warrior ghost.

XVIII.

All this proclaimed, he thus proceeds :

“ Times are when men may speak their own
As decently as others deeds.

My time is come mine to depone :

A sacred duty, ere life ends,
Both to my country and my friends.
Hear me, then, how these facts I learned,
How fighting for my country earned
The traitors' meed ! by midnight host
When seemed our city all but lost,
By mandate of mysterious birth,
Our prison keeper called me forth,
Armed me and took my honour's pledge;—
I hastened to the embattled bridge :
'Twas there I learned the facts I tell,
'Twas there by me the Sard king fell.
'Twas there I came—that stranger knight,
Whose hand redeemed his country's fight !
'Twas there I fought—that land to save
Which dooms me now a traitor's grave."

XIX.

Scarce is the bold assertion done,
At which all in amazement seems ;
When through the court loud clamours run,
And, sudden as the lightning gleams,
Vaults forth before the astonished sight—
And Pisa cries—" The stranger knight !"

With armour black, and sword unsheathed
Visor upraised, and looks that breathed
A proud appeal to all addressed,
Behold ! Catalca stands confessed :
By one bold act, before each eye,
Thus giving as it were the lie.
At once—'tis like the electric shock—
All cry: " Albino to the block !
" Convicted !—traitor ! murderer ! liar !"
While blazed confusion's wildest fire,
The priest and prisoner, looks aghast,
In silence on each other cast.

CANTO X.

THE DEVELOPEMENT.

Non è senza cagion l'andare al cupo.—Dante.

So criminal and in such capital kind.—*Shakspeare.*

I.

O HEAVEN, sustain, sustain my song ;
Still sway the power that wakes my lyre ;
O grant my muse to bear along
And reach the goal on wing of fire !
No classic idols have defaced,
Nor slavish rites my theme disgraced :
To thee, Most High, alone I 've prayed,
To thee, my invocation made,
That every trait may there be shewn
In nature's faithful colours drawn,
Adorned in fiction's lawful style,
And free as truth from falsehood's guile :

Unlike the soul-corrupting lays,
That rise, through vice, to spurious praise.
E'er since the great arch-fiend began
His arts, to work the fall of man,
Of all the plagues the world hath cursed,
Misguided genius is the worst;
To list whose strains, or weak, or strong,
Unhallowed passions drive the throng.
O not to be the first in fame,
E'en till the world be wrapped in flame,
Would I debase me with a theme,
To mar man's hopes, God's law blaspheme,
An atheist scoff, a sensual dream. }
Arise, ye loyal sons of song,
Join in one glorious patriot throng,
And point wheree'er the foe appears
Your phalanx formed of virtue's spears.
Rise for your God, king, country, laws;
Nor doubt that Heaven will aid your cause.
Now to my tale; O grant, kind Heaven,
That in fit strain its close be given.

II.

The headman stands with axe prepared,
To give the scene its fatal close ;
The chain-bound prisoner's neck is bared.—
'Twas now the generous instinct rose,
The maidenly reserve was gone,
And forth again the heroine shone :
“ O Pisa, hear ! I swear, (she cries)
If by thy voice that prisoner dies,
The stranger knight thou hast o'erthrown,
And shed his blood who saved thine own.
O Pisan senators ! defer ;
Nor irrecoverably err
By haste, while yet truth's clue Heaven gives ;
While yet Albino's follower lives.
Albino's blood if that block stains,
Justice is dead, and treason reigns ;
Ruin stalks forth, and at his head
A Pisan, who the invasion led.
While, Heaven-directed, on my tower
I watched for Pisa's awful hour,
As flashed the lightning through the storm,
Too well I saw the traitor's form ;

As thunder paused, on Pisa's wall
Too well I heard the traitor's call.

III.

The sudden tumult scarce is laid,
Scarce order's course again begun,
And all deep listening to the maid,
When through the crowd new clamours run ;
And greeted by his country's cheers,
Goldava 'mid the court appears.
That war-worn form, declined in age,
May well each generous heart engage,
How far more now, on such a scene,
In modest nobleness of mien :
That once firm step, in vigour waned
By age, and recent wounds sustained,
Tell, tho' at ebb, his tide of life
Still turns to flow in patriot strife.
He comes, and lo ! behind him borne
Is one who seems to shadow worn ;
By life's last pangs so agonized,
Scarce may the wretch be recognised.
Goldava straight accosts the court ;
“ My lords, my greeting must be short ;

Albino's follower here I've led,
Whose breath of life is almost fled;
He comes before ye to unroll
The guilty burthen of his soul."

IV

The assembled multitude is wound
Up to the mind's intensest pitch
In one vast spell the whole seems bound,
While listening to the dying wretch:
"O my soul of its load is tired—
"Of guilt—of perjury!—I was hired—
"Falsely—to—swear"—Convulsed his eyes
Roll round, he struggles; heaves; gasps; dies;
Leaving the unfinished evidence,
And all in terrible suspense;—
Till an accusing voice exclaims;
"Behold how end the boasted claims!
If aught such broken words infer,
'Tis adverse to the prisoner.
For, mark his scheme—how 'twould have shewed,
Had his slave's conscience borne the load,
Which bade him swear, when, from the tent
That morn on foot his master went,

A band had seized, by lawless force,
His master's armour, arms, and horse."

V.

Sharp fly the words on slander's wing,
But Chinzica's quick thought supplies
An antidote to mar the sting.

"Goldava, see where stand, (she cries,)
Two candidates: each claims, in strife,
The honour to have saved thy life.
Thou alone truly canst decide
By which of these the Sard king died:
That seeming hero who there stands,
Or he with chain-dishonoured hands."
Goldava springs and grasps with smiles,
Catalca's hand; but quick recoils
As from a snake—and with wild gaze,
Stands for a space in mute amaze;
Then passing to the prisoner's side,
The friendly grasp of hand, there tried.
The touch at once thrills through his veins,
Albino to his breast he strains.
Then catching forth his chained hand—"There!
Behold (he cries) what shall declare

My life's preserver: Him by whom
Our country 'scaped its threatened doom!
That ring, in battle's pause, I placed
On the hand now by chains disgraced."

VI.

A portion of the public tide,
But all too weak for mercy's ends,
Now flows toward the prisoner's side:
Too weak against Catalca's friends.
They, ruling since Rhodoro's fate
The faction that besets the state,
Have deemed with self-sufficient pride,
That they alone its helm can guide.
Not that all men who take that part
Have not their country's weal at heart;
Many act blindly, treason's tools,
The ever-shifting rabble's fools!
For though its bark be wormed all round
Still Pisa's tree at core is sound.

VII.

"How slavishly is all controlled,
Where prejudice extends her sway!

How ill doth that to truth unfold,
Where falsehood's bands have found the way ;
Entered the castle of the mind,
And sentinelled the gates behind !”
Such, when Goldava's speech hath ceased,
Are the words of the stranger priest ;
Who thus proceeds, in tone deep strained,
As if his voice—perchance was feigned :
“ O Pisans ! hear a brother speak,
Of whom sharp woe hath blanched the cheek ;
Who long hath watched for Pisa's weal—
Unceasing watched her wrongs to heal.
O ! my lords ! this strange cause suspend ;
Lest guiltless blood should stain our land.
Better that guilt unharmed remain,
Than innocence for guilt be slain :
'Tis Heaven's own hand, that now unveils
The treason that our land assails ;
'Tis Heaven's own voice cries out, Restrain ;
O ! let it not be heard in vain !”

VIII.

As when a banished wanderer hears—
Though not his native tongue, yet like

Some tone oft heard in early years—

His country's accent, it doth strike
Electric on his heart, and all
His thoughts to native scenes recall :
Such doth that priest's voice now impart
To many a sympathizing heart ;
But chief to Chinzica's. Again
The speech proceeds in bolder strain :
“ Deem not in solitude's retreat
I've studied, how the grossest cheat
Triumphs o'er truth mid public strife.
I've mingled in the throngs of life,
And seen the oft experienced test ;
Seen truth by prejudice repressed,
While callous to each sense of shame,
Comes bold imposture's lying claim ;
Truth's fair undaunted front it wears,
And onward confidently bears,
While all its ways are taught to bend
As prejudice and passion tend.
O by that guiltless blood, which ran
Atonement for the sins of man,
Ye Pisan judges, I invoke !
Suspend, suspend the uplifted stroke !

Shed not the prisoner's blood ; but pause,
And re-consider this strange cause.
When even the glorious Judge above,
Who judge of every judge must prove ;
Ere he the judge of mankind sate,
Took on himself man's fallen state,
Shall sinful man on man decide,
Nor even in fancy stoop from pride—
Even in imagination trace
His own lot in another's case ?
O ! if before the court of Heaven,
The accusing power to Hell were given ;
By all infernal arts round hemmed,
What soul would e'er pass uncondemned ?
Would Heaven as witness let appear
Such as this day have witnessed here ?
O ! my lords ! think were you arraigned ;
And the main proofs of guilt sustained
By shameless profligates like those,
Notorious held all good men's foes ;
Think, think, my lords ! were such *your* fate,
How lost, how lost would be your state !
But mark, my lords, the two who swore
Albino thrown on Arno's shore !

Two panders to the sinks of vice,
And bought at every ruffian's price.

IX.

"How provest thou, priest, they falsely swear?"

Exclaims Catalca. Quick replies
The priest emphatic: "I was there!

"There! and escaped the traitor's spies."
Smothering his rage in bitter sneer,
Catalca turns: "Hear, judges, hear!
"When all this long-tried cause hath been
Just brought to its last closing scene,
Witness on witness comes to light,
To mend and set your judgments right;
Reverse guilt's doom, and your decree
Hold up to scorn and mockery.
First at the point of death they bring
A recreant slave; and then a *ring*.
A ring forsooth! of all false things
None falser than troth-plighting rings"
"Hold," cries Goldava, "before Heaven
I swear, that ring by me was given—"
"By thee was given? then on my soul
'Twas given to me; *from* me 'twas stole!"

Retorts Catalca, with a tone,
As if induced by truth alone.

X.

The bark that quits truth's faithful shore,
To sail on falsehood's treacherous sea,
Feels winds and waves increase, the more
It widens from the sheltering lee ;
Till seaward, seaward still impelled,
The billows are to mountains swelled,
And every wave o'er which she flies,
Heaves he^a against the angry skies,
Swift borne by the tempestuous blast,
Till on perdition's rocks she's cast ;
So now each word Catalca speaks,
Against high Heaven more daring breaks,
Till thus, his impious slander ceased,
" Last comes a sinner-saving priest ;
For what ? to save from treacherous stain
The wretch who Pisa's chief hath slain ;
The wretch who struck the assassin steel
To his friend's breast !"——Not thunder-peal,
From cloudless summer sky sent down,
Could strike more dreadful than the frown

That from beneath the priestly cowl
Comes darting ; not the tempest howl
More dreadful, when the seamen mark
Its burst on unsuspecting bark,
Than what in terrible reply,
O'erwhelms the shameless villain's lie.

XI.

The cowl flies back, the long white beard
Sinks to the ground with sudden fall,
And, lo ! of its disguises cleared,
Rhodoro's face appears to all :
Pale as a thing devoid of life,
Yet flashing with the fire of strife.
" Albino his friend's murderer : No !
'Twas mine, 'twas Pisa's deadliest foe !
'Twas he whose boasted patriot tongue
On Pisa's wrongs incessant rung ;
Till she, unmindful of his pride,
Gave me that power he sought to guide.
'Twas he who, since he got not all,
Another's rise deemed his own fall ;
In envy's bitterest cup deep drank,
And from the patriot——traitor sank.

Albino his friend's murderer? No !
'Twas he who brought the midnight-woe,
'Twas he who led the foreign band,
The invaders of his native land ;
Albino his friend's murderer? No !
It was Catalca gave the blow !"

XII.

Rhodoro ceased ; while doth prevail
A pause so terrible and dread ;
All eyes so fixed, all cheeks so pale,
All breath so held, all sound so dead ;
As if 'twas Death himself had spoke,
And all life there had felt his stroke.
Even Chinzica, whose joy's least trace
Had winged her to the fond embrace,
Stands, as if dread's chill power repressed
Each kindling impulse of her breast.
But not alone Rhodoro's rise,
Not that alone has fixed all eyes :
The piping swain and bleating flock,
Sound through the woods from rock to rock ;
But not a whisper stirs the shade,
Where lurks the insidious ambuscade.

XIII.

At length the senate's chief outspoke ;
 " What thing art thou ? come by what spell ?
Pisa's lost chief ? Or some fiend broke,
 For wicked purpose, loose from hell ?
Why comest thou ; comet-like, to fly,
The terror of our social sky,
In reckless eccentricity ?"
Rhodoro thus : " I 'm he whose force
Was pushed into eccentric course,
To counteract great social harm,
Not needlessly to spread alarm ;
To weigh 'gainst treason—not in vain :
As comets the sky's poise maintain,
But for whose check, attraction's power,
Into one mass the stars would shower.
All evil is not blameful done,
The fault lies where the strife begun.
In righting wrongs each drop we spill,
Curses the hand that caused the ill,
If he who plods at wonted pace,
Through times that need the unwonted race ;

Or he who strains unwonted speed,
Through times of wont, for vulgar meed,
Be deemed eccentric ; then my claim
Merits at least a different name.
But there's a standard clear to all ;
Nor can you justly wicked call,
Howe'er eccentric be their line,
Courses that cross no law divine ;
Neither that flight a reckless thing,
Which spreads for good the eccentric wing."
" No need for priestly reasoning now,
(Exclaims the judge)—speak ! who art thou ?"
" I'm he who two months past a band
Of Pisan warriors did command ;
Whose thrice-raised voice had warned in vain
My country of invasion's train ;
Whose purposed course to serve her need,
Was thwarted all by treachery's deed ;
By treachery, which for foreign gold,
At once my life and country sold.
I'm he, who, when a traitor crept,
Thief-like, and stabbed me while I slept,
Awakening, struggled for my life,
And turned aside the assassin's knife ;

From camp was secretly conveyed,
While in my place a corpse was laid,
So marvellously fashioned, none
But well might take it for my own :
For easier is it to portray
Lifeless than animated clay.
I 'm he who lay on Etna's side,
Hemmed by the lava's glowing tide,
Secure from those who sought my blood,
As if beyond the Stygian flood ;
Till, for my threatened country's weal,
It pleased high Heaven my wounds to heal,
O'er fire, land, sea, with arms and horse,
Safely to guard and guide my course,
To where I saw my native soil
So circled round by treason's coil,
That all approach the alarm to bring,
Was guarded by its mortal sting.
I 'm he whose shield of ghastly light
(After long vigil day and night
On Julian's hill and Pisa's coast)
Gleamed o'er invasion's startled host.
While through their ranks my spear was plied
Until my country " Victory !" cried.

XIV.

Inured to wiles in every shape,
Far more prepared than show betrays,
Still prompt, still prompt for desperate 'scape,
With calmness thus Catalca says :
" Thou callest me traitor : well you may,
Where such examples lead the way !
Your patron saint, your church's head,
The Saviour of mankind betrayed.
If I 've, like him, played traitor's part,
It hath not been with coward's heart ;
And cocks may crow to burst the ear,
Ere I shall shed one recreant tear."

" Our patron saint thou hast belied.
He ne'er betrayed ; he but denied."
Rhodoro thus. Catalca : " I
Like him, my master then deny.
Thou callest me traitor : well you may,
If treachery 'tis thee to betray.
I led the foreign foe 'tis true :
Against my country ? Against who ?

An oligarchy, whose vile rule
Had made my country their footstool!
Panders of priest-craft souls to draw!
And venal barterers of law!
Shall I be member of that state,
Beneath the rule of all I hate?
Shall I to Pisa yoke my neck?
The globe's my country, not a speck!
Even the great globe is scarce a base
For that which ranges endless space.
Where is the Pisan soul would fill
The draught-place of a tyrant's mill?
Or where's the Pisan soul would be
Like light, like air, boundless and free?
Rhodoro—I'm not unprepared,
Now, let us see whose plot is marred:
Who now shall ride triumphant: he
Who raised, and made a ghost of thee;
Or who shall drag the tyrant down,
And lay the ghost that haunts the town:—
Behold the Host! that white-robed throng,
Who sung thy friend's death-warning song!"
Catalca paused. The heroine maid,
And all whom these last words dismayed,

Turned to Rhodoro, as to spy
If danger peared upon his eye.

XV.

As he who guides, in gallant bark,
His country's embassy afar,
Gone forth with every hopeful mark
To avert each cause of hostile jar,
Insult on insult sees prepared,
And war in all but name declared;
Tries every friendly art in vain,
His country's honour to sustain;
At length, despite superior force,
Resolves one bold determined course,
And, save himself, to inculcate none,
Himself fires off the signal gun:
As thus upheld his country's fame,
And lowered the pride of hostile claim;
Returning home with favouring breeze,
Watching his course through doubtful seas;
A sudden trembling of the keel,
Strikes through the crew; with dumb appeal
Quick to their chief's expressive face,
All turn at once, their fate to trace.

No selfish terror there expressed ;
But “ all is lost ! ” is half confessed.
The moment’s pang is past. New force
His look assumes—valour’s resource !
The prompt resolve that, cool and bold,
Plucks safety from destruction’s fold ;
The mild yet firm command that leads
And order mid confusion breeds.

XVI.

Now many an anxious glance around
The throng was cast, but no word spoke ;
Now hushed again was every sound,
Until the chief-judge silence broke
“ Rhodoro, say—who was’t portrayed
Thy death, to save thee from the dead ?
Who watched thy life mid Etna’s fire ? ”

“ ’Twas he who gave me life ! my sire !
My exiled father, whose wide roam,
Far from his country, kindred, home,
Procured, from heathen sages drawn,
Science to Christian lands unknown,

And arts which superstition's eye
Alone as lawless could decry.
My exiled father, whose recall,
Too slow for treachery's haste, came all
Too late to save our house's fall !
Yet still it hath availed to lend
The power our country to befriend ;
And rumoured death, by treason spread,
Now falls like death on treason's head."

" Like death !" in furious reply
Catalca's voice resounds—" We 'll try !
Like death !—Like death !—*One* warrior ghost ?
Behold at my command a host !"

XVII.

These threatening accents scarce had died,
When, blazing with portentous light,
The host shines forth in warlike pride,
And vanished are the robes of white ;
All save a group of forms that stand
Ranged in the centre of the band :
Both still mysterious, robed and mailed,
For not a face is there unveiled.

“ Think not (Catalca cries) my game
So desperate that unbacked I came.
These are the ghosts at my command ;
And, if there’s need, I’ve more at hand.
To mar those arts that raised alarm,
And emptied gaols to swell the harm.

XVIII.

With searching glance Rhodoro eyed
The symbols that strange host betrayed :
Some round their necks wore steel nets tied,
And some red crosses there displayed.
Now in alarm the court had rose,
And all again seemed fearful pause ;
When thus Rhodoro, whose calm air
More dread made what his words declare.
“ ’Tis not my country’s traitor’s vaunt,
Or hostile shew my soul to daunt ;
It is my country’s voice I fear,
’Tis that alone can vanquish here.
Mine was no vain or foul pretence ;
’Twas to clear slandered innocence,
My country’s traitors to unmask,—
For this I came ; I’ve done my task.

Why thus unsphered, I 've moved alone,
Far from my rightful course, I 've shewn;
I 've shewn who Pisa whelmed in strife;
I 've shewn to whom she owes her life;
And now let Pisa's voice decide,
Which of these powers her arms shall guide.
If 'tis Rhodoro's, spite this show
Full soon shall lie all treason low;
If 'tis Catalca's, hence I 'll cease,
And, if I may, depart in peace."
As ceased this speech the throng, all round,
Rhodoro's name in thunders sound;
While still as death the host remain,
As if kept silent by disdain.

XIX.

Thus power in wavering balance veered,
When on the Arena's westward side,
A road-soiled messenger appeared,
And to Catalca eager cried:
" My lord, here 's Guasto's chosen power.
Rhodoro's friends, the army's flower,
Had secretly embarked by night.
No sooner Guasto learned their flight,

Than following straight has made good speed
To Pisa's strand. In case of need,
Himself with guard of horse is near;
The rest are marching in the rear."
Catalca, with a leap from earth,
Gave a wild scream of frantic mirth:
"Guasto? overwhelm us not with power!
Guasto!—himself of strength a tower!—
By Hell! this tops our utmost call:
Now at our feet lies fortune's ball;
And spite of all the fiends of sky,
Up to the stars we'll make it fly!—
Rhodoro, hear me—now—before
The cup of my revenge runs o'er,
Hear what I've drank already—hear!
Then deaf for ever be thine ear:
I talk not of thy mother's death—
Thy house's fall!—that's but a breath:
The matchless form for which you sighed,
For which you prostrated your pride,
For which you'd thousand deaths have died,
I possessed—ha—!—and cast aside?
That thread in which your soul was wrapped,
That thread of love——by me was snapped—

XX.

“ Threads of earth may be lost, or stole
By thieves,” Rhodoro calm replies ;
“ But that in which is wrapped my soul,
All save the hand of Heaven defies !
Vain are thy vaunts ! of love bereft,
What though I be, friendship is left.
In intervals of care and strife,
Loves serves ; but friendship serves through life.
“ Though love may reach a higher joy,
’Tis oftener mingled with alloy.
Love is the river’s mountain force,
Friendship its even tranquil course ;
Love is light’s fierce and dazzling blaze,
Friendship its mild reflected rays ;
Love plumes its wings in days of bliss,
But friendship rises in distress ;
Life may be borne though love should end,
But who can live without a friend ?
Even love itself, when passion’s past,
To friendship must subside at last.
Vain are thy vaunts ! of love bereft,
What though I be, friendship is left.”

XXI.

“Less vain my vaunts than thy vain hope!

For —— shall I only cross thy love?

Shall vengeance find no wider scope,

Nor friendship too my triumph prove?”

As thus Catalca speaks, a guard

Rhodoro and Goldava barred

All access to assist the friend,

’Gainst whom his eye doth now portend.

“Rhodoro—Chinzica—mark! Fate,

That once my love marred, once my hate,

Squares all again by this one blow,—

Thy friend! thy lover! and my foe!

Guilt proved, and sentence past, all saw;

And thus *I* execute the law!”—

Chinzica flew and grasped him round,

He dashed her madly to the ground,

But still she desperately clung,

He dragged her savagely along;

Gasping with rage, to see his deed

Resisted, where he least had heed.

Goldava and Rhodoro strain,

Sweep down the guards but all in vain.

Still gasping on, the traitor gained
Where stood the prisoner helpless—chained.
When, checked again, to frenzy stung,
He turned to her who round him clung,
And raised the dagger he possessed,
And aimed it full against her breast.

XXII.

But, ere it reached, his arm was struck,
And a form stood before his sight :
The blow was like a lightning shock,
The form was like a warrior wight.
And a voice hallowed in his ear,
He twice before had heard in fear,
And twice before had felt its power,
(On Pisa's bridge—Sisimondi's tower !)
“ Here, traitor ! here 's the knife you need :
Here 's the knife for the assassin deed ;
Here 's thine own knife to stab the maid :
Her brother's blood still marks its blade ! ”
Ere pealed the voice's last dread note,
The knife was in the traitor's throat :
Gorget and cuirass betwixt,
It found its way, and fast was fixed.

XXIII.

Staggering and choking with the wound,
His gorget loose Catalca tore :
And as he glared bewildered round,
Drew forth the knife all red with gore ;
Whence, following fast in horrid flood,
Out gushed a cataract of blood.
Like to a man all brutal drunk,
Reeling he fell, and rose and sunk :
Or like a wild bull yet half slain,
Raging he sunk and rose again,
And sunk and rose, still spouting gore,
Until he fell to rise no more.

XXIV.

Amazement o'er this scene is bent,
When, hark ! a trumpet's blast is heard ;
And ere its echoes all are spent,
Guasto has entered with his guard,
Stout chargers bearing horsemen armed.
But nought for this new foe alarmed,
He who had slain the traitor cried ;
“ Guasto, too late ! thy chief hath died.”

“Hath died!—by whom:” “By me!” replies
The strange war wight. “How!” Guasto cries;
“Thy steel net shews thee of our sect:
And thou hast done this treacherous act?”
The stranger thus:—“Well dost thou know
Such outward badge a treacherous show.
And what religion e’er did bar
The use of stratagems in war?
Worst of war! where sedition’s hate,
So spreads its venom through a state,
That honour’s self is forced to take
Falsehood’s disguise, even for truth’s sake!
I wear this badge as fire to draw
Out heat, as cold is drawn by snow;
And the more it proves false to you,
The more ’tis to my country true.
Falsehood’s steel net my outward part;
While truth’s red cross is at my heart.
But now a wider net is cast,
And treachery’s shoal ensnared at last,
Thus my steel net I cast away,
And thus my red cross I display.”
He spoke and did: “Now do the same
“All who their country’s pardon claim!”

XXV.

He ceased, and Guasto with a curse
Loud shouts—the traitors wildly cry ;
“ Art thou the famed ghost ? where thy horse ? ”
“ Why must we doff our steel nets ?—why ? ”
To Guasto first, “ One soon shall rise
“ To lay thee,” the strange wight replies,
Then to the traitors turning round,
With haste his helmet-clasps unbound ;
“ Why you must doff ? too soon you ’ll feel,
When caught in your own nets of steel ; ”—
Then waving high his helm in air ;
And from wild wintry bush of hair
His eyes forth flashing on the crowd ;
Roars out with passion hoarse and loud :
“ For there is danger in the wind
“ And foes before and foes behind ! ”

XXVI.

Not, after months of dreary night,
To ice barred navigator shews
More cheeringly, day’s orb of light
Uprising from the polar snows ;

Than that wild unhelm'd head, I trow,
Doth show to many a Pisan now.
Now as fast off steel nets were thrown,
And in their place red crosses shown,
I trow 'twas by the traitors known,
Their plots by Storgo all outdone.
'Twas now the wavering culprits tried
To loose their steel nets, or divide ;
But all, save those beforehand taught,
Locked by one master key, were caught.
Yet even where steel nets still betray,
All who have crosses to display,
May hope for mercy ; but woe, woe,
To all those who have none to shew :
Those are the desperate, and I trow
They shew themselves right desperate now.

XXVII.

Throughout the arena, for a space,
Such tumult and confusion reigns,
I ween no looker-on may trace,
Who triumphs, who defeat sustains :
Like a volcano, newly burst,
Or hell, or something as accurst.

But brief as fierce : while Guasto's horse
Drive through the throng, and treachery's force
More reckless grows—each outlet manned—
From all escape and succour penned ;
Storgo has loosed the prisoner's chain,
And armed him with spoils from the slain ;
Broke through the ring of guards that bound
Goldava and his master round ;
Has given a whistle for the steed
And cried, " Now, master, now for speed !"
When sudden with a thundering sound,
Proud leaps into the arena bound,
A huge war-charger black as night,
Breathing and foaming gleams of light.
Slung to the saddle bow appear
A warrior helm, and shield and spear ;
While rapid as a rush of wind
The rider with his horse is joined,
Aside the priestly cassock thrown
And all his blazing armour shewn ;
And treason's last chief rolled in dust,
Hurled down by Pisa's warrior ghost ;
And tumult laid ; and peace again
Restored ; each traitor bound or slain.

XXVIII.

This scene like some wild dream hath passed
O'er Pisa's scarcely conscious mind :
Come and gone like a mountain blast
That leaves its wrathful marks behind,
Again the host is re-arrayed,
And now each warrior face displayed ;
And Pisa hails her army's flower,
Returned in such a needful hour ;
Though too late for the first great woe,
In time to avert the second blow.
By these strange arms and robes supplied
And Etna's hermit for their guide ;
From Sicily, on Pisa's shore
They 'd but arrived the night before,
Assembled on St. Julian's height,
And there first shewed their wondrous light :
But how the plots were laid and fixed,
Which 'mongst their ranks the traitors mixed,
Was ne'er divulged, though some declare,
In these foul plots the Devil had share,
To whom Catalca, it was told,
For some dire end, himself had sold ;

That twixt both sides the arch-fiend passed,
And took old Storgo's shape at last.
These gossip tales, if false or true,
I may not say; but this I 'll do :
I 'll say, in foul plots every where,
The Devil is sure to have a share ;
And to mar foul plots, I believe,
Oft Heaven permits hell to deceive.

XXIX.

Who are the white-robed forms that stand,
Their cherub faces now unveiled,
Grouped in the centre of the band,
Sweet contrast to the warriors mailed ?
These are St. Julian's sisterhood.
They likewise, for their country's good,
Their portion of these plots have played ;
And bravely, albeit sore afraid ;
'Twas they in last night's floating throng,
Whose voices raised such heavenly song ;
By them the outcast corpse was borne,
And o'er it vigil kept till morn ;
And well I trow all now may trace,
Portrayed in each angelic face,

The paleness of a sleepless night,
The terrors of a day of fright,
The minglings of dread woe, and joy,
That rise from 'scaped calamity.

XXX.

But, lo ! where enters from the west,
With marching, soiled, and bright with arms,
Of Guasto's chosen power the rest,
To fill the scene with new alarms.
Why were they passed the city-gate ?
Why not warned of their leader's fate ?
Why ! why !—You 'll utter many a why,
Ere Pisa's harassed state reply,
But mark and listen ! while the new
Arrived, their brother warriors view
With arms so marvellous in show,
As if borne by no earthly foe ;
And stretched upon the arena plain,
The traitor chiefs like wild beasts slain ;
While great Rhodoro stands portrayed
Like life, in these strange arms arrayed ;
And his brave friend now free from thrall :
Both idols once, still loved by all ;

While great Goldava they behold,
And Storgo's looks so wild and bold ;
While Julian's lovely sisterhood,
And Pisa's angel maid, are viewed ;
While the black canopy outspread,
Casts o'er the scene a night-like shade,
And darkening with the sinking day,
More fearful makes that strange array.

XXXI.

Listen and mark ! while he who led
That strange array from Etna's side ;
No more as Etna's hermit clad,
But like that host, in warrior pride.
Listen and mark ! while forth he stands,
And thus harangues the opposing bands :
Where veneration blends with fear,
As old Sismondi's voice they hear.
“ Behold me, long exiled, returned !
Behold my son !—for dead both mourned !
Behold us both, by Heaven's kind hand
Preserved, to aid our native land !
Must we with whom they've fought and bled,
With whom to victory oft been led ;

Must we our comrades now oppose,
And count them for our country's foes?
Must we or they in such strife die?
Forbid it every human tie!
Now mark me, Pisans, while I show
The cause of all our country's woe:
Mark me! And let us hence avoid
To cherish this foul curse—'Tis pride!
'Tis pride! by which even angels fell!
'Tis pride! by which mankind rebel:
'Tis pride by which all ages past,
Are deemed inferior to the last—
Whose dispositions, thus displayed
On all by former wisdom made;
Is to abuse, not to enjoy;
Is not to mend, but to destroy.
Works that whole ages cost to raise,
In ruin one mad moment lays!"—

XXXII.

" In pride there 's oft a sullen spite,
Which doth against itself rebel;
Which, rather even than gain by right,
Would cross that right and leap at hell.

Pride's fumes exhaled through power's desire,
In high ambition's clouds aspire,
Till chilled by disappointment's blast,
In blighting showers they fall at last.
Revenge is slaked like thirst! like breath,
Anger is spent; avarice to death
Yields: love's fierce burning age destroys;
Each passion with its object dies;
Each has its object out of self,
As beauty, power, fame, pleasure, pelf:
And all by death's cold touch subside;
All save that master passion, pride;
Whose object, being born within,
May prove an endless source of sin.
Where life's excitements all are passed,
Then sinks each corresponding blast:
But pride, which on its own soul thrives,
Immortal as that soul survives.
Like some vast tree which takes deep root,
While far mid sky its branches shoot;
Pride, which through all time's depths doth lie,
Will shoot through all eternity.
O! haste then, haste then, pride to quell,
While life yet stays, and death bars hell!

In every human breast 'tis sown,
And takes all forms to hide its own ;
Through all degrees, from pride that apes
Humility, to loftiest shapes.
The worm that eats the heart of sense ;
The spring of disobedience :
Moral corruption's first great seed, "
Whence all the vengeful passions breed ;
It poisons love, engenders hate,
And envy is its last estate.
O ! haste then, haste then, pride to quell,
While life yet stays, and death bars hell !"
He ceased : awhile the rebels stand,
With bloodless cheek, and nerveless hand :
But 'tis not long : with clattering sound,
At once their arms are dashed to ground,
And they before their country kneel,
While bursts from all the land the long-applauding
 peal.

XXXIII.

Ere this eventful day doth close,
 A second trial is held here,

Even on those dead, as well as those
 Alive; the proofs are short and clear.
All the chief traitors are condemned
To hang in chains: but he who claimed
Treason's first place, pre-eminent
Must also be in punishment.
O'er Pisa's bridge his corpse is drawn,
From Pisa's wall like offal thrown,
At that part where, with foreign band,
He scaled against his native land,
Thence, all along the very track
By which he led the foul attack,
Thence, with two wolves yoked on before,
Dragged by the heels to Pisa's shore;
There gibbeted, with limbs wide spread
With upward feet and downward head,
While his bones hold, he'll hold that post,
To scare marauders from the coast.

XXXIV.

But turn from these foul forms away—
 To her whose virtues grace our scene,
As new sprung joy's ethereal ray,
 Now lights her lovely face and mien.

As the bright glowing summer sky,
That seems all broken to the eye,
When looked at through a leafy grove,
Each fracture like a star above ;
So beams from Chinzica's fair face,
Through shadowy griefs, joy's broken trace.
O! Chinzica ! if heart so shook,
May yet again life's pleasures brook ;
Thou, who with angel courage fraught,
Hope to thy drooping country taught ;
Thou, who thy griefs so calmly bore,
Yet could so high in feeling soar ;
If bliss with life may yet combine,
It surely, surely shall be thine ;
Thy father and thy brother found ;
Thy lover saved, thy love-knot bound,
And all with patriot glory crowned.

NOTES.

NOTES.

CHINZICA.

“ RENTRES dans leur patrie, ils excitèrent leurs concitoyens à prendre les armes contre les infidèles. Leur enthousiasme se communiqua aux diverses classes du peuple ; tous les jeunes gens montèrent sur les vaisseaux, et une flotte nombreuse fit voile vers les mers de Calabre, pour y combattre les Sarrasins.

“ Cependant, presque en vue des rivages de Pise, un roi Maure, nommé Muset par les Latins, Musa par les Arabes, s'étoit emparé de la Sardaigne, et y avoit fondé une Colonie de Corsaires. Il fut bientôt averti que tous les plus vaillans citoyens de Pise s'étoient engagés dans cette expédition chevaleresque, et qu'ils avoient laissé leur ville presque sans défense. Une nuit ses galères pénétrèrent dans l'embouchure de l'Arno, et remontèrent le fleuve jusqu'au milieu de la ville : les habitans, éveillés par des cris horrible, apprirent en même temps le débarquement des Musulmans dans le fau-

bourg à gauche de l'Arno et l'incendie de leurs maison. tout le peuple prit la fuite et se dispersa ; une femme seule, de la famille Sismondi, nommé Chinzica, au lieu d'accompagner les fuyards, se précipita vers le palais des consuls, encore que le pont, et la route qui, le long de l'Arno, unissoit le faubourg a la ville, fussent infestés par les Sarrasins. Elle annonça aux Magistrats le danger de la patrie, et fit sonner le toscin du palais. Les Cloches de la ville répondirent aussitôt à ce signal d'alarme ; les citoyens s'encouragèrent à la vengeance."—SIMONDE de SISMONDI, *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*.

Labouring gives a mountain birth.

“ Had this great philosopher (whose superior merit is universally allowed) been informed that Mount Vesuvius rising 3659½ feet above the level of the sea, and whose basis extends about thirty miles in circumference ; and Mount Etna, rising no less than 10,036 feet above the same level, with a basis about 180 miles in circumference, were as evidently formed by a series of eruptions, or volcanic explosions in the long course of revolving ages, as the Monte Nuovo, near Puzzoli, was by one, only in the very short space of forty-eight hours ; with such information, I say, he would certainly have treated the subject of volcanos very differ-

ently."—*Campi Phlegræi; Observations on the Volcanos of the Two Sicilies*, by SIR W. HAMILTON.

CANTO VI. Stanza XIII.

"It would be endless to give an account of all the caverns and other curious appearances about Etna. Kircher speaks of a cave which he saw, capable of containing 30,000 men."—*A Tour through Sicily and Malta*, by P. BRYDONE, Esq., F. R. S.

In the well feigned battle fray.

"And the mock fight, usually exhibited every third year, on this bridge is, perhaps, the only remaining vestige of those athletic games, heretofore so common among the Greeks and Romans. The amusement consists in a battle fought by nine hundred and six combatants, who clothed in coats of mail, and armed with wooden clubs, dispute for forty-five minutes the passage of the bridge. The strongest combatants, possess themselves of the field of battle, and when it is possible to employ stratagem, they never let slip the opportunity; but to fight in earnest is forbidden; nevertheless, this mock encounter frequently costs lives, and is therefore but seldom permitted, though one of the most beautiful

spectacles in Italy. Some authors tell us it was instituted by Pelops, son of Tantalus, king of Phrygia; others think it was established by Nero; while others believe it to have been originally celebrated in memory of the defeat of Mussetto, king of Sardinia, which happened in the year 1005, upon a bridge at Pisa."—*Letters from Italy* by MARIANA STARKE.

*A cross which 'midst a heap doth stand,
Of earth, both brought from Holy Land.*

“ Archbishop Ubaldi Lanfranchi, (who was contemporary with Richard Cour-de-Lion, and his brother warrior in the Holy Land,) brought to Pisa a large quantity of earth from Mount Calvary, and deposited it on the spot round which the walls of the Campo Santo are now erected.”—*Letters from Italy*, by MARIANA STARKE.

As comets the sky's poise maintain.

It seems strange that astronomers have not suggested to the world, that such a use of comets is a necessary counterpart to that Newtonian principle of attraction, by which all bodies throughout the universe are supposed to tend towards each other. If concentric motions, proportioned to

the respective attracting forces, be necessary to prevent our earth and planets, from falling into the sun; what is it, we may ask, that prevents our whole solar system, and those of all the fixed stars, from falling into each other? What supports them in that fixed relative position, which their respective attracting powers have a constant tendency to destroy? If to counterpoise this gravitating influence, their motions were, like those of the planets, round some common centre, so, like those of the planets, would their relative positions be for ever changing. In accounting for the equipoise of our own, or any other solar system, with regard to itself, we may confine our observations to the concentric motions of the planets; but to explain its equipoise with regard to all other solar systems throughout the universe, we must extend our view to a far wider range of causes,—*The eccentric motion* of the comets. For instance, all those comets that are now going forth towards any particular point of the heavens, are dragging, yoked, as it were, in the strong though subtle harness of attraction, their respective solar systems against those forces of counter-attraction operating in an opposite direction. The little respect we are apt to feel towards any thing eccentric, however great our amazement, seems chiefly owing to our ignorance or disbelief of its utility; and so far is this the case with regard to those great eccentric bodies, which I apprehend, are the grand

supporters of the whole starry system, that the word comet is, in many cases, made use of as a term of reproach and ridicule; or at best, of ironical compliment. Eccentricity, like every thing else, can only be respectable in proportion to its application; and it only becomes absurd or criminal, when adopted for a trifling, a useless, or a wicked end. To correct our prejudices on this subject, it might not be amiss to consider, and as christians, to consider with all due piety and reverence, that the great examples of eccentricity in the moral world, as comets are in the physical, are on the one hand, our Saviour and the true prophets; on the other hand, satan and the false prophets. Or it might be better to say, that as by sin, an undue *gravitating* influence was produced on the destinies of intelligent beings, so, by a great eccentric course of moral exertion, the balance was restored, and mankind prevented from falling into utter ruin and confusion. The great number of comets which are known to belong to our solar system, their amazing velocity, and the great distances to which they run out into empty space, and the numbers of those known, being nearly equally divided between the direct and the retrograde motions, are circumstances that seem strongly to favour the foregoing hypothesis.

Herself fires off the signal gun.

“ The first shot was fired by the captain’s own hand, that in the event of the Chinese demanding those who fired, instead of those who ordered, or of seizing upon any innocent person, he might fully place himself in the situation of being individually responsible for all consequences.”—*Narrative of a Voyage in His Majesty’s late ship Alceste, commanded by Captain Sir Murray Maxwell, to the Yellow Sea, &c., by JOHN M’LEOD, surgeon of the Alceste.* Page 135.

THE END.

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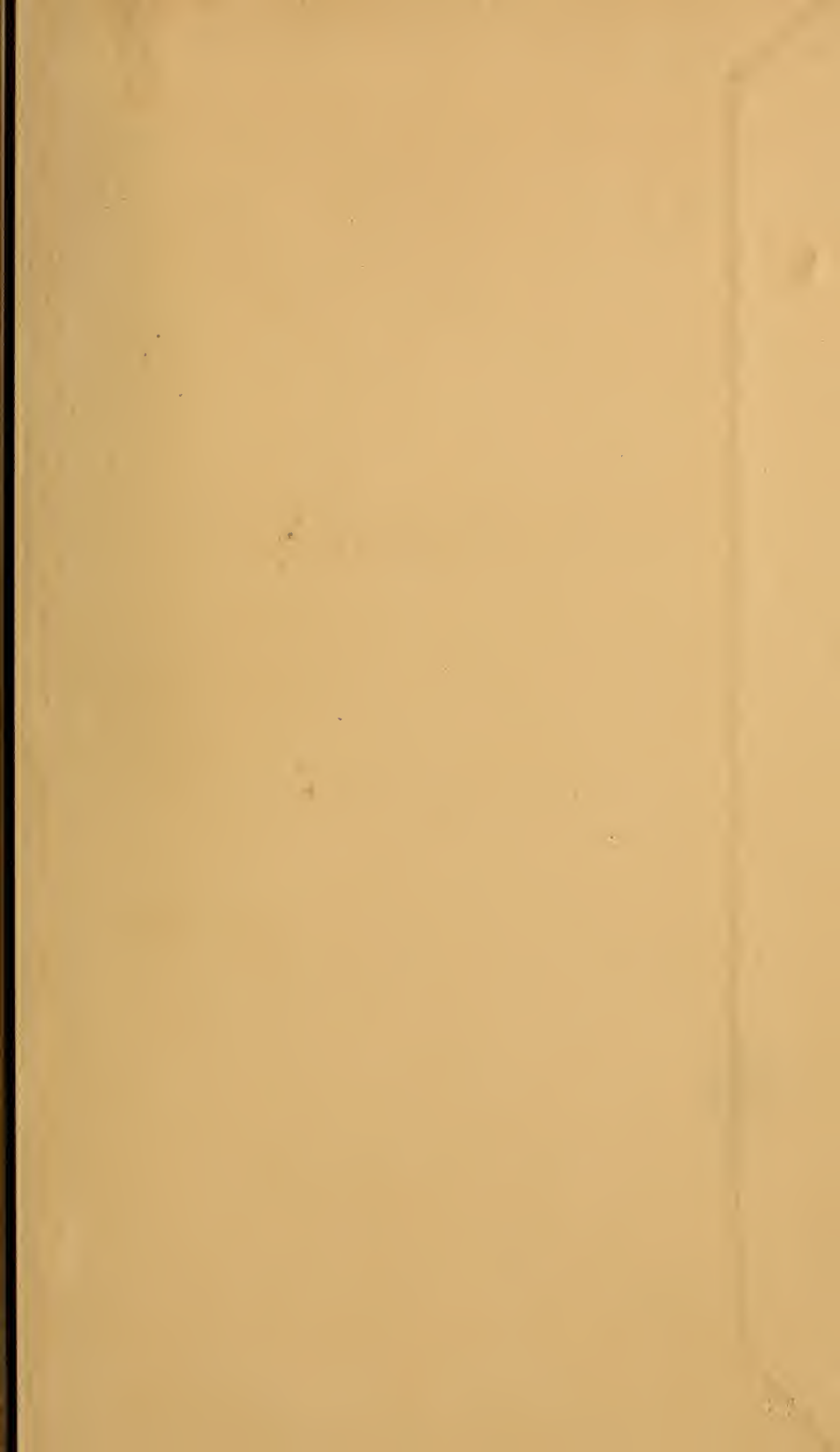




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